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PEEPS FROM A BELFRY:

OR THE

PARISH SKETCH BOOK.

BY

REV. F. W. SHELTON,

AUTHOR OF "THE RECTOR OF ST. BARDOLPH'S," "SALANDER," "CRYSTALLINE," ETC.

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THE LOST TOMB-STONE.

A SKETCH OF THE PARISH OF ST. DONOTHIN.

THERE once flourished, but now feebly exists, a church in a certain part of our extensive territory that shall be nameless, which, for distinction's sake, we will call the church of St. Donothin. If the name of no such saint may be found in the calendar, then we can only say that he deserves to be canonized, for the respect and allegiance which is paid to him is not a whit less universal than that which is given to the memory of St. Patrick. St. Donothin was remarkable for the placidity of his nature, and at an early period of his life was smitten with a withering paralysis. He always smiled, and remained immovable in the most pressing emergencies, and his vocation

appeared to be to administer rebuke to those who were disposed to do too much in their day and generation. He sleeps, but not more soundly than when he lived. We recommend the name of the saint as a good one for churches. St. Paul's and St. John's and St. George's, are already extensively appropriated by those which illustrate the shining virtues which attach to the names. There are others which should have been erected to the memory of St. Donothin.

The one which we speak of, for many years before the war of the Revolution, and for some time after, was like a vine planted in a beautiful part of the Lord's heritage. Though it was sometimes visited by the frosts of adversity, and despoiled of the branches which were its ornament and pride, it was still renewed in some more propitious spring-time. Thus was the fervent prayer of the Psalmist answered whenever it was offered up in the courts of the Lord's house, by those who made melody in their hearts:

> "To thee, O God of Hosts, we pray;
> Thy wonted goodness, Lord, renew;
> From Heav'n, thy throne, this vine survey,
> And her sad state with pity view."

In times past, the services of this church had been kept up with unfailing regularity. In the near grove which cast its shadow over the place

might be seen long files of carriages on a Sunday, from the humble farm-wagon to the handsome coach of the wealthy, beside large numbers of saddled horses, from which it was evident that the members of the congregation were widely dispersed. But they esteemed the privilege of uniting in the services of their beloved church well worth the trouble of coming from a long distance, and did not need to be reminded by the church-going bell, which still sweetly sounded among the mountains and over the valleys at the hour of prayer. Many of the materials and fixtures of the church edifice had been brought from England, and it was built according to the style most in vogue at the time, with cumbrous galleries, pews square and high-backed, and a massive oaken pulpit, high up, and attainable by winding steps. Its organ was small but elegant, and originally had a fine tone, but was now almost past repair. It had and still has these things, but its condition suggests a melancholy contrast with the past. The sightly tower is still seen through the grove, the church-going bell is occasionally made to toll on a Sunday, the congregation of the dead is increased, but that of the living sensibly diminished. If it be asked what has occasioned a declension so much to be regretted, it may be

replied that the causes are many, and some of them beyond control. In olden time it was assisted by contribution from abroad. The "Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts" did much toward holding up the weak arms and strengthening the feeble knees; and a debt of gratitude to that noble Institution yet remains to be paid. This fostering care of infancy, it must be confessed, has not been well requited. For the obligation extended farther than to the receipt of money from the exchequer of the Church. With no slight sacrifice of toil and self-denial did the first able, and accomplished, and highly educated ministers come hither, to lay strongly and well the foundations of a work which might have been afterwards maintained with comparative ease. But no sooner, in the course of nature, or in the progress of political events, had their assistance been withdrawn than remissness succeeded, and the rank weeds were permitted to grow up. Those who had been so well cared for in the first struggles of life, showed a disposition to do little for themselves. The green moss grew on the roofs, the lintels were decayed, the keys rusted, the bells ceased to toll, the fences were broken down, and the cattle roamed freely over the graves of the dead. During those long inter-

vals, when the services were wholly withheld, the flock was scattered never more to be recalled into the same fold. They sought some kind of nourishment, and they gathered it at the hands of those who deprecated the deleterious food on which they had been brought up. In many places, both at the North and at the South, it is only necessary to read the inscriptions on tomb-stones in the grassy cemeteries of decayed churches, to awaken a deeper melancholy than springs from walking among the monuments of the dead. Those are familiar names, and many in the same neighborhood still bear them. But do they visit the places rendered sacred by the sepulchres of their fathers? Not at all. They have, perhaps, never listened to the services in which their fathers joined, and it may be are even instructed to regard them with contempt.

The congregation at St. Donothin's were amenable to this charge of neglect. Other circumstances, however, largely contributed to the melancholy declension of this ancient and respectable parish. The decay of wealth, the exhaustion of landed estates, the diversion of trade from neighboring towns, the building of new churches in more eligible sites, the arrival of less desirable new comers, and sometimes party strifes, combined

to produce the result. There is at present little energy in the administration of affairs.

Soon after the Revolutionary war, there resided in the place two English maiden ladies of good family. They came to the colony with their brothers, young officers in Cornwallis's army, one of whom died on a sick bed, the other in battle. Owing to the terror of the deep, or from other causes, the sisters never returned to their native land. They fixed their abode at ———, where they remained until the end of their lives, and were buried in the parish church-yard. A suitable monument was erected over their graves. There are some very old persons in the neighborhood who still remember the Misses Delany, and the tradition of them is remarkably distinct. There has been a dearth of similar people in the locality ever since, and their former residence is almost the only story which it can boast. They were stately dames, (so we learn from the aforesaid tradition,) seldom seen to smile, and ever robed in the weeds of mourning. A deep and settled sobriety, such as might well become exiles and mourners, but at the same time not such as to destroy a cheerful demeanour, or mar their visages with woe, made them objects of interest, and caused them to be approached with deference

and respect. Moreover, they maintained a style of living, unequaled at the time in the place, as it has been since. It was a combination of elegance and severe simplicity, such as excites admiration, precludes envy, and is alike becoming to humility and pride. Their equipage and outward modes belonged to them of right, and were rendered natural and familiar by use. They exhibited nothing pretentious or unseemly, although in marked contrast with the many.

It must be remembered that in the early days of our Republic a stately style first introduced by the colonial dignitaries was not at once discarded when the political order of things had become changed; nor did the forms of life immediately become adapted to the new ideas. Hence the very fathers of the Constitution retained the aristocratic appendages to which their eyes had become accustomed, and which might appear unseemly now. So also did the few people of quality in those rough times, when the colonies had made little advance, sometimes come together in splendid assemblages which outshone all the fictitious pretension of modern vulgarity and wealth. There is a great distinction betwixt the present and the past in our own country in this

respect. There was at that time a more solid foundation for outward show.

The Misses Delany rolled along on the edges of the pine groves in a carriage which would have passed scrutiny in London, at the court-end; yet the poorest people in the neighborhood, while their attention was arrested, saw nothing which was discordant with their ideas of propriety, for these ladies only possessed a pride of which they might be proud. Their establishment though handsome was without pretentious glare, their entertainment quiet and elegant, and they were distinguished by their generous charities to the poor. They were devout and constant attendants on the services of the church which they loved, and some memorials of them yet remain in the shape of solid and substantial gifts. Many years the sisters lived together, respected and beloved by all who knew them, and in their deaths they were not divided.

Not very long since, what I shall relate occurred. A package came from England addressed to—

"*The Reverend the Rector, or the Wardens and Vestrymen of St. Donothin Parish,* ——— ——— *County, United States of America.*"

This, after a long and careful scrutiny of the seal and superscription by the village official, was stored away, with many expressions of wonder in a pigeon-hole especially devoted to its reception. He was sure that it contained money, and for what object was alike puzzling to himself and to the little knot of people who stood around on the opening of the mails, and through whose hands consecutively, before being deposited, the document was permitted to pass. The circumstance was the occasion of no small talk and conjecture in the immediate neighborhood, which was not destined to be speedily solved. For some weeks curiosity was kept upon tip-toe. Everybody came to obtain a sight of the letter, which got considerably soiled in the handling; and so eagerly did they balance it in their palms, and peep in at the corners, and stick their fingers under the edges of the envelope, that they only fell short of breaking open the seal and being liable to indictment for a state-prison offence. They "wished they knew who wrote it;" and they "wished they knew what it was about," and "what any one in England could have to do with the parish of St. Donothin."

"I guess the Queen wants to get back them

tablets that the British gave to the church before the Revolution war," says one.

"I shouldn't be surprised," rejoined another, "if that was just it."

"I guess you've hit it," added a third, "and may be she wants to take away the silver cup and give it to some of her own folks. It'll come tough for the Episcopals to give it up. They aint what they onc't was in these parts. The old church looks bad enough. I don't believe they got money in the box to buy a new bell rope."

"Wal! wal! may be some one's goin' to give the parish somethin' to help it along. It wants it bad enough. That kind o' praying from a book won't go down in this kedntry; and arter all, a great many on 'em obliged to come back to makin' *extempur* prayers."

The speaker was a man of middle age, with head slightly grizzled, close, compressed lips, sharp nose, and a peering eye. His father and his grandfather lay buried in St. Donothin's church-yard, and he had been nurtured in the bosom of the Church of England, but had fallen away from his allegiance in one of those long intervals during which the church had been shut up.

St. Donothin had relapsed into sloth. The

few who were possessed of real strength, from want of zeal failed to exert it at the very time when the valuable acquisition of past years, and of noble sacrifice on the part of their predecessors, were placed in jeopardy. Because no arm was stretched over the wide ocean to hold them up, they permitted their own arms to relax and hang feebly at their sides. Now, if one or two who had the means and ability had stepped boldly forth in this time of need, then would the order of things have been unchanged, and this once beautiful vineyard would have still been as the garden of the Lord. But we fear that St. Donothin is destined to be St. Donothin.

And why did not the postmaster send the letter to its address? or why did not the Rector come and take it out? Was he not accustomed to indulge in correspondence, or did he not at least call once a week to obtain his "religious" newspapers for Sunday reading, and keep himself posted up as to what was doing by those who were evangelical, or those who were not evangelical? Had he no curiosity, like the rest of the population, to take a peep into the box, and to break the magic seal, that those who looked over his shoulder might be enlightened as to the contents thereof? The Rector did not take it,

for the best reason in the world: because the parish had no Rector; nor had any been settled for the space of a year. The last, though a good man, officiated to a mere handful of people, who were so totally indifferent as to church matters in general, or church doctrines and practices in particular, that after a long effort, accompanied perhaps by much zeal, but an unfortunate want of knowledge and of tact, he relinquished his position in disgust; for they all turned the cold shoulder to him, and left the poor man in the lurch: on which account he removed his tent, and built his altar in the far West.

But why did not the church wardens and the vestrymen come to claim the letter, whose contents might be deeply interesting to the parish of St. Donothin? For the simple reason that it is doubtful if there were any church wardens or vestrymen who claimed to be such. Year after year was the ordinary notice of election given out at the time of Easter, but only two or three women came to prayers on Monday and Tuesday in Easter week; consequently the old vestry held over. But of the old vestry, a number had declared that they would not serve. They had taken offence at some conduct on the part of the Rector, or had some misunderstanding among

themselves. They therefore declared, that they would come to church, (which promise they only partially fulfilled,) and that they would pay their pew rent, (which they seemed to consider an act of extraordinary munificence,) but that they would have nothing to do with the management of the church's affairs. Moreover, supposing that they *were* willing to come, why one lived on the mountain-top, and another ten miles off, in the valley; and a third on the opposite side of the river; and a fourth was absent on a journey; and a fifth was so old or decrepid that he could not leave his house; and a sixth had important affairs of his own to attend to; and a seventh had been elected without his consent, and had not been informed of it; and an eighth could not anywhere be found. It was, therefore, impossible to get them together: nor at any meeting, however long advertised, was there ever a quorum to proceed to the transaction of business. In the part of the country which we speak of there were many parishes in the like position, yet the diocese claimed to be particularly sound. This was, in fact, a miserable parish: nor did the members of it deserve to be blessed, because they had not the heart to appreciate the privileges of the church. From a long course of insubordina-

tion, they were destitute of any sentiment of respect for the priestly office, because they had been taught to entertain indifferent views of the same. In this emergency, the unfortunate missive, which was rife with important information, which had been talked of for miles around, and whose contents so many were itching to be made acquainted with, and which, in all probability, contained *money*, was in danger of being sent to the dead-letter post-office. The functionary did whatever lay in his power to prevent this from coming to pass. The letter was advertised in two numbers of the "North Forest Weekly Chronicle;" a paper whose circulation was from three to four hundred. One morning, while the mails from the North and South were being opened, Squire Bigley arrived at the office, and the following conversation took place betwixt himself and the postmaster:

"Look-a-here; aint you one of the wardens?"

"Wal, I dono. I believe I was at one time. So they tell me."

"There is a letter here for the wardens."

"So I'm hear'n tell. I am a junior warden. Ef I take it out the judge will be offended."

"Why don't the judge come? It's *advertised*."

"Because he's got a stroke of the apoplectics; this makes the second, and another will knock him off the perch, sure."

"You don't say! He's been a long time ailin'. Wal! wal! being as that is the case, why don't you act in his place?"

"I 'spose I might as well."

"Here is the letter."

A little crowd immediately collected around the squire, who cracked open the seal in less than no time, and there lay before his astonished eyes a £50 note of the Bank of England. The letter which was addressed to the Rector of the parish, ran thus:

"Reverend Sir:

Two members of our family, Misses E. H. and L. Delany, died in your parish, it is presumed about the year 17—. Without doubt a monument was erected to their memory. It is the wish of their relatives that this should be replaced by another, according to the plan and style specified herein: to cover the expense of which we enclose £50, and will send fifty more if needed. By ordering this work to be performed, and by informing the undersigned of the accomplishment of the same, reverend sir, you will do an act of sacred charitv, and will lay under the greatest obligation,

'Your obedient servant,

 "R. De L."

"Wal, I declare," said the squire, "don't that beat all? It must be eighty year sin' those old creaturs gin eout, and there's somebody in Englan', two or three thousand mile off, to hang onto 'em still!"

"Yes," said a prominent member of the little crowd, who had a pair of spectacles on his miniature nose, "I have heerd tell that there was always somethin' queer about their blood."

When the worthy warden had tucked the banknote in a limber and greasy leather wallet, which he had carried in his pocket time out of mind, he drove away to his plantation, and was not heard of until it became high time for him to give an account of the money. He might have rolled it up and lighted his segar with it, or have put it out to interest on his own account, and nobody in St. Donothin parish would have troubled him any farther than to throw out sly hints and defamatory remarks about his character. But he was not a dishonest man, and only what was called, in the peculiar lingo of the country, a "slow horse." He kept the note a month or two with as much security as if it had been deposited in a safety bank; and as the church doors were closed, and the bell-rope was broken, and the sexton of St. Donothin's was lately dead, he had not an

opportunity of seeing the vestrymen, and he let the matter rest for a convenient season. At last, however, the possession of the money troubled him. He began to reflect that if it should be lost or mislaid he might be held responsible for it, and might be reached by a long arm over the wave. The first thing which he did was to put his spectacles on his nose, stir up the sediments of the ink in a pewter inkstand, nib an old pen, and drawing forth a sheet of foolscap paper, acknowledged the receipt of the money, saying in effect :

"Sir: Yours, [of such a date,] has come to hand, and your wishes shall be attended to. There is no clergyman in this parish at present, and when we shall get one we dont know, as our means is limited. I will lay your request before the vestry, and when we get the tume-stone cut will let you know.

"Yours, obedient,

"_____"

The next step which the worthy warden took in the matter was taken by accident. For having gone to the county court-house, on a public day, he met two of the vestry, who had also gone thither to attend to some business of their own, and made them confidants and co-partners in the matter. They agreed to meet together at the church, on the following Sunday, when somebody was

expected to "preach." Accordingly, when the day came, they were actually on hand, and held a long consultation on the porch until the Litany was about to be read, when they adjourned until after the benediction. They then began to spook about among the graves, to find the stone which had been erected to the memory of the late Misses Delany. In vain they persisted in this pious endeavor. They pushed away the briar bushes, drove the cows before them from grave to grave, examined all the old stones covered with moss, by the touch of feeling, to decipher the inscriptions, and looked at the broken slabs which were standing against the fence. There was a rough stone, scratched upon, apparently, with a nail, with the name of a man who was killed by falling from the roof a hundred years ago, when the church was building, on which the inscription was extremely legible; but no marble could be found inscribed with the name of Delany. That there had been one in existence within the last ten years, somewhere or other in the church-yard, they knew, because they remembered it, but as to where it now was, they could not tell. What a pity that the old sexton could not be appealed to; but he himself was in the hands of the stone-cutter. "If he were alive,"

said they, "he could tell." Yes, no doubt, he could tell; but, as it was, they must resort to somebody who was not dead. After a vain search, and considerable consultation afterward at the gate, the meeting adjourned *sine die*. Several months elapsed, when the vestry again met *by accident*, and thought that something ought to be done, and they resolved to call a meeting of the congregation. But how to do it? That was the rub! If they advertised in the "North Forest Chronicle," a great many would never see it until it was a month old, and the appointed day had gone by. If they depended upon a Sunday, but few people would get together. It was a week-day's job, and they resorted to an ingenious week-day device. One of the party ascended the belfry, and marked the time of "Hail Columbia" with the clapper of the bell. In less than ten minutes a goodly assemblage was on hand, who resolved themselves into a committee of the whole to go and search up the memorial. They could not find it. What was to be done? One thing very plainly; and that was, to return the Bank of England note to its owner on the other side of the wave. No; there was another alternative. It was suggested that there must be somebody in the parish who knew something

about the tomb-stone, which had not been a great while missing. There was an old man, over ninety years of age, who resided a few miles off. "Then," said a bystander, "we better get him to onc't, for he's wery totlin', and at any minute he may hop off." A deputation of two was accordingly forthwith dispatched to bring the old man out. He was brought to the church-yard in a wagon, and in a week after what occurred—in a hearse. He remembered the ladies perfectly well, and pointed out the identical pew in which they were wont to sit; and he said he could mark the place where they were buried. On going thither the ground was found to be somewhat sunken, but the memorial which had been erected was gone. "Here," said he, "is the very spot: I know it, gentlemen, by this old tree, which was at the time of the funeral a slender sapling, and the Rev. Mr. Aldis stood directly before it as he read the burial service." "That is all sufficient," said the Squire, and he immediately drove in a stake. "It's of no consequence about the old tombstone; it's probably worn out." "Not quite," replied the patriarch: "I think that I can tell you where that is;" and as a few drops of rain began to fall, they adjourned to the porch.

. "Where do you think it is, Mr. Watkins?" said the warden.

"Why, you are standing on it," rejoined the old man.

Sure enough, the slab had been employed as a foot-stone, and lay before the sill of the church door. It had been stepped upon until the letters were nearly effaced.

"Upon my word," exclaimed the warden in surprise. "It is strange that I had not thought of this. I put it here myself. I saw an old stone standing useless against the fence, and dragged it here. All right! all right! Much obliged to you, Mr. Watkins. How is your rhumatiz?"

"About the same that it has been for the last fifty years, Squire; and I am afraid that this journey will not improve it. However, I must soon come to lie down with these sleepers. I am an old man! an old man! These courts used to be once dear to me. It wasn't a few drops of rain which would keep me away when I had my strength. Now everything has gone to decay. There is a great weight of responsibility resting on your shoulders, gentlemen, and God will bring you to accouut for your lukewarmness and neglect. Mark the words of an old man, who is just stepping into the grave. It won't be many

days. I feel as if I were only waiting for the carriage. When I die I want the service read over me, and I don't want my tomb-stone to be trodden upon."

At the conclusion of this patriarchal speech, which was a very good vestry oration, and delivered with much vigor, they got the old man into a wagon, and jogged along with him over the stones and down the hill.

It was a source of great pride and congratulation to the vestry that the object of their search had been accomplished. They took great credit to themselves for their energy in the matter. They sought out the nearest stone-cutter, and they caused the monument to be erected. There it stands, a plain shaft, inclosed in a substantial iron railing. The dust of the sleepers lie mingled beneath, and no feet of kindred ever presses the sod, but it is evident to those who muse in the solitary place, that the hand of affection has been busy after the lapse of so many years, and memory still returns to her loved shrines ; and what is of much moment, a respect for the resting-place of the dead is vindicated : that sentiment of a refined and civilized and Christian heart. As to the church, it is still destitute of the ministrations of a settled rector. The owls and the

bats have taken a lease of the building; and this is all I have to say at present about the parish of St. Donothin.

FATHER BOYLE:

OR THE DANGER OF PULLING DOWN HIGH CHURCH-STEEPLES.

I HAVE alluded heretofore to some of the good and bad features of the voluntary system, and under this head have made in a kindly manner some remarks on the annoyances to which the clergy of all denominations are subjected, and the unchristian spirit of attacking their conduct on certain ostensible grounds, while the real motive for such procedure is studiously kept concealed. For there are many ways of accomplishing a desired end. It is often hard to oust an incumbent for his mere theoretical opinions, unless they appear distinctly heterodox; and as for mere subtle shades and hair-splitting distinc-

tions, on which Theologians do not understand themselves, you cannot drive the tenacious from the place which they occupy, and can at best but surround them with hot water. Then it becomes necessary to proceed against them on common grounds, where a lever can be safely planted. Nothing is said of that strange concurrence of circumstances by which such action is apt to recoil on the heads of the judges or inventors; but it appears to me that it might be adequately set forth by a story of which the chief merit will be that it is not fiction, to which there is no need of resort, when fact is better.

One morning we went to visit our parish church, where circumstances made it necessary to level its sightly tower. It had been the ornament of the landscape, and was the first object which greeted the eye through the trees as you approached the village coming down from the neighboring hills. We were regretting the loss, as it gave the whole building an unfinished aspect; but it was a matter of necessity, and we could not very well afford to build a new one. For a tower and well-proportioned steeple, pointing to the skies, are appropriate adornments of every house of God; and after these a sweet toned

bell, or rather musical chimes, which may be rung upon the ears of succeeding generations, and within, a solemn organ well played.

But the crash of the falling tower brought to mind a circumstance which occurred many years ago, which I will narrate simply; although at the first blush there does not seem to be much in it. In the valley of the Sweet Waters there dwelt an old clergyman, known all about by the name of Father Boyle. He lived to a protracted age, and what is a wonder, was tolerated to the end of his life in his own parish. *Tolerated*, I say; but *only* tolerated. He lost his teeth early, but maintained the use of his tongue to the last, although it became difficult to understand what he said. It was nothing but mum-mum-mum, mumble, mumble, mumble. Preaching he unfortunately considered his forte; and he was universally voted by all the young people an intoler able old bore. But as you will at times observe amid the greenness of the new-born year some snowy patches of the departed season, so there were in the parish many white heads to represent the days gone by. The mountain air was blithe and brisk and bewitching where Father Boyle lived, and old age frequent. The coeval men, while they tottled yet upon the verge of life,

took a pride and glory in the preacher. They would have almost disinherited the grandchild who had the high treason to speak disrespectfully, at least in their presence, of Father Boyle.

Now there was a church-warden in the parish who did not like the Rector, for reasons of his own, which were entirely independent of his want of teeth and hum-drum preaching. But the old gentleman was so placid, that he could never come to blows with him, metaphysically, nor find a cause of *quasi* quarrel with him, until he ingeniously thought of the *Church-steeple*, which he asserted was too high. Now the church-warden committed a great mistake, and no doubt shortened his own life several years by causing it to be pulled down. The way of it was this. There was an ugly weathercock surmounting the same; and one day as he passed by the church, he took such a grudge against the tin animal and its very unartistic painted tail, which was due to the genius of the village tinker, that in his capacity of church-warden, he made a solemn resolve, (buttoning his coat up to his throat as he did so,) that the object must come down.

"Oh, no," said Father Boyle, "it is a relic of olden days, let it remain."

"But," said the other, "if the equinoctial blast, *now brewing*, does not *blow* it down, I will *tear* it down."

The storm came, the winds blew, the rains fell, and after the sun shone again on the devastated orchards, and the prostrate willows, the tin rooster stood as if in the act to crow.

"Now," said he, "that bird shall come to the ground."

"Oh, no," said Father Boyle, "if you will respect my feelings, you will let him alone."

"Oh, but," said he, "it has nothing to do with your feelings. I *do* respect your feelings, but the chanticleer must not stand there. He is only made of tin."

And with that the church-warden was as good as his word. The loss was, in fact, an improvement to the steeple.

"Very well," says Father Boyle, "you have attacked the apex, but I hope that the base will stand firm."

"Undoubtedly," said he.

"I am afraid that you do not like me," says Father Boyle.

"Oh, but I do like you," replied he. "What has that got to do with the church steeple?"

Soon after this, the following circumstance occurred.

The warden was a very large man, and, strange to say, his nerves were in worse condition than when he became older. One day he took a notion in his head that he would ascend the belfry, and having got there, he must needs go a little higher by the ladders, and almost to the point of the steeple, *to overlook the parsonage*, and to take a view of the surrounding country; for it was said that thence the best view could be obtained. Having reached the last rung of the ladder, he sat down and panted as if his heart would break, cast his eye hastily over the landscape, and perceived that the view was fine, looked down for the sexton, but he was gone. He became alarmed. Just then, a strong breeze springing up, caused the tower to vibrate like an arrow shot into a board. He thought it was coming down, and clutching the rungs roared for help. The good sexton, when he came, with difficulty could assist him to descend. The tower was strong enough for its purpose, and always *would* rock a little in the breeze; but from that time he could not divest his mind of the idea that it was unsafe.

He never passed by afterwards that he did not

expect to be crushed, and he began to talk about in the houses of the country farmers that the steeple of the church was unsafe.

"Oh, no," says Father Boyle, "if you allude to such a thing, I shall consider it an attack on my judgment, for I assert that the steeple is safe enough."

"It has nothing to do with your judgment," said he, "but if the fabric is badly constructed it should be looked to."

"That is all right," replied the old man, "take your own way."

"I will," said the church-warden.

Now, the carpenters in the neighbourhood, who were merely plain men, gifted with ordinary sense, at first said that they did not believe a word of it. But the church-warden, who was a man of wealth and influence, said to them, "Don't you see that the steeple is unsound?" and speaking, he frowned with great severity.

"We don't know but what you are right," said they.

"Very well, then," replied he, "don't you think that the steeple ought to come down?"

"Most undoubtedly," said they.

"Then we will have it down," replied the church-warden, and down it came.

Not a great while after this, when the grandee was talking with Mr. Boyle, and the latter disagreed with him in opinion, the first said, "Our church is in need of repair. They tell me that the beams of the tower are much decayed, and if that be not repaired very speedily, the whole edifice must tumble to decay."

"Ah ha!" said Father Boyle, "is that so?"

"Just so," replied he.

"Then we must look to it."

It was even so. Upon examining, it was found that after the steeple had been removed, the rain had leaked down along the timbers of the tower. The rafters were decayed, the shingles were decayed, the nails were coming out, the whole edifice was in a bad state.

"Well," said the carpenters, "it is a pity, but the tower must be removed, or else the whole church."

"It will spoil the looks of the building," said the villagers.

The carpenters could not help that. They examined the structure again, and gave it as their decided opinion that if the tower were not pulled down it would fall, and that soon. And indeed it did fall, at the very moment when the warden

was standing beneath, and killed him on the spot. Soon after the whole church was taken away, and this shows the danger of *pulling down Church Steeples!* because they are so high that they rock a little in the stormy breeze. It was not so much the fault of the steeple as of the warden's head, which was a little weak.

GOLDEN-MOUTHED TAYLOR.

THIS title has been accorded to Jeremy Taylor, nor is it inappropriate or undeserved. That eulogy which was given to the Grecian who treated merely of wine, roses and love, (for the heathen Greek had only a delicate perception of beauty in its visible form,) might more truly be applied to him, the Christian Bishop—the scholar, the poet, and the man;—that what he wrote was "more golden than gold."

This is not an extraordinary expression. For even gold may be corrupted, while intellectual treasure can never lose its brightness. Time tries the literary works of men, of what sort they are. The brilliant position of a writer, friends and pa-

tronage, royal *imprimatur*, a prevailing taste and appetite, main force, and mechanical means, may give a fictitious value to that which cannot abide by the deep secret rules of beauty, which are acknowledged in the models, but too subtle to be defined. Representative paper will be worn out in the circulation, or however long it may pass, must at last be gathered up, and accounted of no value unless it can be redeemed with pure gold, stamped with genius ; and so will superfluous literary reputation be clipped. The rate of interest decreases gradually, until posterity thinks that it is no more than honest to repudiate the debt. On the other hand, by similar contingencies, the noblest work may be pressed down for a time, in the dull, cold pool of Lethe. A Prophet is not without honor, save in his own country ; and often it may be said, nor a Poet save in his own time. Shakspeare lives *now* more than when he lived. His wonderful language is mouthed every night in a thousand theatres, and perhaps every second is passing under eyes glistening with admiration; and when men are wrapt in sleep in one quarter of the globe, they take him up by daylight in another hemisphere ; and the arts are glorified by selecting his page to illustrate their triumph; and his leaves

fall incessantly from a multitude of presses like the waves of a cataract.

Milton, we may say, was partially buried while he lived, and transfigured after his death. As in a whole city there may not be enough art to stamp a work of art, nay in a whole nation, to appreciate a work of which a nation may be proud, so a whole age may not be able to convene its Academicians into a Senate; but in a few ages the scattered opinions of the dead shall combine with the voices of the living, in a firm, weighty Areopagite judgment, from which there is no appeal. Then is the great man fixed on an enduring pedestal, from which he cannot be cast down. The living are envious of the living, but time disarms envy, and pours flattery into a dead man's ear. We may deny to our cotemporary the virtue of patience, but cheerfully commend the attribute of Job, so long as Job is not present to wound our vanity.

But true works, by the electric fire which is in them, will at some time or other shine out. The writer of them is in an inferior sense a creator, and the life which he has infused is like that breathed by God into man, immortal. Their outward form may decay, as their very words become obsolete, but the spirit remains. Bury them in

the dead Latin, overlay them with a crabbed and harsh dialect, place them high up on the shelves of the Vatican, where Mezzofanti's eye may never reach them, or in the very tomb, (as heroes are buried sometimes with their armour,) their light will slowly force itself through the great interval, the dense medium, the mist of ignorance—(just as it takes the beams of some stars a hundred years to reach the earth,) till it is intercepted on the bright surface of intellect, and refracted in a flood of glory on the world. And even if Destruction flap his wings of fire over an Alexandrian library, there is some guardian to catch the characters upon his eye in the ashen semblance of a scroll, and propagate them forever.

Concerning the author of whom we now speak, it cannot be said that his genius was ever unacknowledged. It always shone with a steady, unintermitted lustre. When he was a young man, it was said of him: "his florid and youthful beauty, sweet and pleasant air, sublime and raised discourses, made his hearers take him for some young angel, newly descended from the visions of glory. His discourse was beyond exception, and beyond imitation." Nevertheless, falling upon the unhappy times of "King Charles the Martyr," he was buried for awhile, and in his retire-

ment composed many of those beautiful works which we now have; and at this day they are found in so many libraries, he is read by so many admiring eyes, that his former renown may be considered obscurity, and his fame is even brighter than when his silver voice rang in St. Paul's. Though his own body has long since passed through the terrible ordeal which he himself depicts in those words of tender melancholy, called "Bundles of Cypress," through "the hollowness and dead paleness, the loathsomeness of a three days' burial," he has created above him a spangled firmament for his fame to dwell in; the very fragments struck from the heat of his great mind have become worlds of beauty; bright thoughts dwell in clusters; new planets come twinkling on the mental vision; wherever his creative hand has been, the whole field is sprinkled with a plentiful golden dust; and in the midst of all, the great luminary of his genius shines with a perpetual soft splendour.

If we examine his page attentively, we shall find him to possess in the highest degree all those requisites; any *one* of which, if exuberant, is sufficient to make a great writer; imagination, fancy, wit, immense learning, originality, judgment, a despotic control of language, and of

knowledge. In most cases, if you find any of these in excess, it implies a defect somewhere.

For the most part, a very great man will be distinguished for nothing in particular; while a very great genius, alas! will too often be distinguished more for what he has not, than for the remarkable gifts which he has. Nature is chary of her dower. You will often find much talent, and no common sense; much wit, and no judgment; good judgment, and no moisture in the clay, not even enough to lubricate the eye, or corrugate the rough skin into a smile: one faculty will bulge out, and other parts be so dwarfed as to be deformed. Where can you look for

> ——— "a combination and a form indeed,
> Where every god doth seem to set his seal,
> To give the world assurance of a *man!*"

It has been well said by a heathen poet, το οναρ εκ Διος εστι—dreams come from God. And this may apply to a chastened imagination. All eloquence, whether from Heathen or Christian, is in one sense an inspiration, for it is the gift of God; but there is none like that drawn from the very altar, and invoked from the very angels who

> "Touched Isaiah's hallowed lips with fire."

One may be holy, and not eloquent; but not eloquent in the highest sense, unless holy.

It is no wonder then, that the young lecturer in St. Paul's made his hearers take him for "some young angel," when we read of him that "he spent the greatest part of his time in heaven; his solemn hours of prayer took up a considerable portion of his life; and we are not to doubt that he had learned of St. Paul to pray continually, and that occasional aspirations and emigrations of his soul after God made up the best part of his devotions."

Next may be mentioned a substratum of sound learning, a profound scholarship, such as would astonish some dignitaries of his rank now-a-days. What accumulated treasures he carried down to the grave with him! There is no richer grave in England than Taylor's. It contained on the one scroll of his memory, the whole transcript of ancient and modern learning, the most choice. What we have is not the bulk of his learning, but the excess of it; a little fruitage and flowers shaken off. He was in richness like some Oriental Princes, who, as they pass on, scatter from their robes enough precious stones to make the finders wealthy, while in the blaze of what remains they are not conscious that they have parted with any.

Some men have a little learning, of which they make a good deal; others a good deal, which they make little use of. Many have a great faculty of acquiring, but not the least knowledge of dispensing, either from the want of magnanimity or desire, or absolute inability. The parts are diverse. Because a man can get money, that is not to say that he can spend it, or will, if he can. He got it for his own pleasure, and keeps it for the same. This author had a better faculty of using what he had than most men, while he had more than most men. And what was his method of using it? Not surely did he pile it up like merchandise, in cumbersome dry tomes. However great the display, this would not have ensured the kind of admiration which he excites, though his wares were even displayed with a cold judgment. This brings us to his distinctive characteristic as a writer. He had an unparalleled warmth and richness of fancy. *Omnis copia naris* might be inscribed over the gateway of his garden. When he had selected the ground which he meant to beautify and adorn, under the warmth and enthusiasm of his nature it was instantly covered with a tropic luxury of bloom, the rarest exotics, the tenderest plants, the sweetest flowers, in the midst of a continual freshness of his own, out of

which the streams of his wit gushed in a perennial flow. His eye flitted with marvellous velocity down the whole line of ancient and modern classic authors, for he had absorbed every thing of real value in the golden, the silver, the brazen, and the iron age; among the moralists, wits, poets, orators, and philosophers, snatching his illustrations from the most diverse sources—every word which he wrote suggestive to him of some reminiscence —literally unable to get his teeming fancies down fast enough in those complex compositions of his, which involve thoughts within thoughts, and essays within essays, until his judgment (tight-reined) threw down the pen in despair, and his overflowing ideas went back for refuge to their own fountain. Now he would snatch a "curious felicity" from Horace, then a few επεα πτεροεντα from Homer, and again a witty saying, or a story from Petronius, fusing all together in no purple patchwork, and as none but he could. What he took in was like assimilated food, becoming a new substance. Thus he brought the elegances of pagan letters and mythologies, and the records of all history, which he had at his fingers' ends, to illustrate and embellish the sublime themes of the religion of Christ. And he cast his eye over

the whole realm of nature in all her provinces, tracing the correspondence between the moral and the physical in many a beautiful and sublime figure, drawing from fire, air, earth, and water, and all the sciences, some fact or analogy to illustrate his themes. As he read, or walked, or talked, if we may judge from his writings, he must have been continually employed in associating what was brought before him with all to which it bore resemblance, and with which it might be classified and arranged; the physical with the moral, and the actual with the ideal. Otherwise he could not, by the mere act of memory, have called up at the instant so many resemblances. But the fact is, he was such a thinker that his work was already done. He had only to reverse the process, and when from things he turned to trace out an idea which he had conceived, his materials were at hand, and that in such profusion, that his main merit was not in finding what he wanted, but in turning off, and dispensing with the riches which crowded upon his mind. Here is where his self-denial (already exercised in more serious ways) and *judgment*, so rarely coupled with youthful fancy, never failed. His recorded thoughts were selected out of many, like the wives which the Sultan loves, and if it is not being ex-

travagant, the rejected ideas might have gone off comforted, on the principle that misery loves company. His mnemotechny was of no barren or useless description; the mere grasping of facts, associated with no principle. But for him no fact was abstract, but everything which entered his ear, passed his eye, or was submitted to his understanding, was suggestive, and became the first of many beautiful golden links. Nothing stood alone. It was all type and antitype. The rose drops its leaves, and is forgotten: the shadow passes, and is no more seen; the arrow cleaves the air, and leaves after it no memory. But it was not so, if they had once crossed *his* vision. He would recall that shadow to illustrate some substance which was fleeting, and of the rose he would say, "Lo! I have seen a rose, newly springing from the *clefts of its hood*, and at first it was fair as the morning, and *full with the dew of heaven as a lamb's fleece*, but when a ruder breath had forced open its virgin modesty, and dismantled its too youthful and unripe retirements, it began to put on darkness, and to decline to softness, and the symptoms of a sickly age; it bowed the head and broke its stalk; and at night having lost some of its leaves, and all its beauty, it fell." If such process as we have mentioned be the secret key which opened

to him his treasures, it does not follow that all or any who know the method, can attain to the result. For this suggestive habit was the offspring of a highly poetic temperament, and was born with him. Those who had not the temperament would not probably have the habit; while those who had the habit might possibly not have the temperament. They would use it, perhaps, for a cold classification, and however rich the material which they might bring together, they would not be able to steep their thoughts in the hues of poetry. This is the deep and subtle mystery of *style*. What enchantment may be produced by culled words, placed in a certain collocation. Express the same sense exactly in different words, or in a different collocation, and the charm is fled. Why is it that certain little cunning phrases in foreign languages, which mean after all little or nothing, cannot be translated, and the very sound of them is suggestive of something picturesque in the mind, we know not what? Why is it that a single word, by its syllabic grandeur—by the very sound of it (just as an august person by the very sight of him,) awakens we know not what emotions? For exemplification of this, see Milton. Shakespeare's use of English is perfectly marvellous. There is something exces-

sively subtle in words, whether we regard the looks of them, or the sound of them. Let any one read that poem which Coleridge *dreamed*, and a part of which he wrote off when he was awake: if you look for sense in it, you will find nonsense. Yet when you have read it through, it has produced a marvellous effect on the mind, and it is really impossible to analyze the method by which that effect has been produced. It is a method of word-painting. It does not contain a thousandth part of that which in some mysterious manner it suggests. The imaginative mind of the reader, as he runs his eye over it, will be building up vague and dreamy temples of enchantment. As he walks out in the fields, the stanzas which a cold man would pronounce nonsense will be ringing in his ears, and in fact he can never forget them. Who can do the like of this but a great poet? We will here say, that with the one exception of Shakespeare, the abilities of the English tongue have never been taxed. For English can express more than the noble Latin, or than the polished, flexile Greek, or than all effeminate languages, which have been softened down from the noble Greek. It is full and copious. In verse it has quantities, which some poets have developed by accident, and some through true knowledge,

as fixed and melodious as the ancient. In prose, it is as grand and sonorous as any language under heaven; but as used by most writers at the present day, it is harsh, and hissing, and unmelodious, whether in prose or verse. There may be noticed in all the old writers, from Chaucer down, a pith and marrow, a bone and sinew and substance, which we have not, and somehow or other cannot even imitate now. Let any one look at "Lodge's Portraits," and notice how inferior are the faces of the year eighteen hundred to those of the year sixteen hundred. It is not that the casques and armor, the ruffles, the general costume produce the effect, but they have all in their very expression a sternness, a dignity, a massive moral grandeur, eclipsing the men of our time. Look at Sir Walter Raleigh—look at Cortez. So it is in letters. The old English writers are superior to us in style. They express more than we can. The Saxon pictures thoughts by referring them to external objects; but when dead and foreign languages, not understood, began to make an incursion, the terms and expressions were to the unlearned as good as abstract. Johnson was pompous and magniloquent with his Latin, and sounded well. The rest followed him, with long sentences and sesquipedalian words,

but the common people did not, and cannot take in the sense as well.

Among all the old English writers, then, we observe a more simple and natural way of saying what they mean. In this they resemble each other, while they differ from us. All writers of the same age, whether men of genius or not, have something about them which smacks of the age. But while Taylor's style was marked by the vigor of the age (to come back from this digression,) *he* was peculiar and vigorous above the men of his age, if we regard him as a poet. He was among the great, but he was greater.

> "He among the rest, in shape and gesture proudly eminent,
> Stood like a god!"

Read those "raised discourses," which made his hearers take him for "some young angel newly descended from the visions of glory," and say whether this be not true; whether there was not in him "the enthusiasm that inspires all great poets and orators; that generous ferment in the blood and spirits that sets fancy bravely at work, and makes it swell and teem, and become pregnant to such degrees of luxuriancy as nothing but the greatness of wit and judgment could keep it within due bounds and measures;" whether he "entertains you in a charnel-house and carries

your meditations awhile into the chambers of death, where you shall find the rooms dressed with melancholic arts," or discourses on holy love, or conducts you into a "golden grove," whatever be his theme, he invests it with excessive beauty,—he charms you with a voice as musical as Apollo's lute. Not one of the men of his day, great as they were, had such a teeming gorgeous fancy. He had something better to do than to gather dews from Castaly and honey from Hymettus, merely to please the palate; to make use of fancy only to divert the fancy. If any one of those "raised discourses" should be delivered in a modern pulpit, are we to suppose that they would so "captivate and enravish" as they did two hundred years ago, in St. Paul's Cathedral? Modes and habits are very much changed since then. Gold and silver plate must be melted down, to suit the modern taste. Some indeed affect a passion for the old: but, as a general thing, "old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new." The earth whirls on its axis faster than it did once. The progress of the age is headlong, and the present crop of sinners is headlong too. Such, at any rate, appears to be the opinion of the preachers. Their hearers are not to be entertained with enamelled meads, and

agreeable flowers, the pictures of "the ways of pleasantness and the paths of peace; their insensibility must be stormed by such appeals as they can understand, and they can understand nothing which will not move them from their seats; they must be entreated, coaxed, and, if necessary, half frightened out of their wits. But while the material of one age must be absorbed and remoulded, to suit the wants of the next, the scholar's eye will still delight to pore over those eloquent works which to the ear are dead, and for his individual taste, he will admire their gems all the more for the antique setting in which they are placed. He will delight to turn back to the heroic ages of literature, and mark the big tracks of the giants in the rock; for the vestiges of such men as Taylor, Barrow, and South, and Fuller, and Brown, and Bacon, are not like the footprints which are now left in the sand. Storms and deluges cannot efface the record that there were "giants in those days," and all their works are stamped with the impress of greatness; and when the question is asked, "Whose image and superscription is this?" the answer will be returned—"CÆSAR'S."

A BURIAL AMONG THE MOUNTAINS.

SEVERAL times has the summer come and gone—several times have the sear and crisped leaves of autumn fallen to the ground, since it was my privilege to administer for a single winter to a small parish in the wilderness. I call it the wilderness only in contradistinction to the gay and splendid metropolis from which I went. For how great the contrast from the din of commerce, from noisy streets, attractive sights, and people of all nations, to a village among the mountains, where the attention is even arrested by a falling leaf. It was among the most magnificent scenes of nature, whose massive outlines

have imprinted themselves on my recollection with a distinctness which can never be effaced.

I account it a privilege to have spent a winter in Vermont. The gorgeous character of the scenery, the intelligence and education of its inhabitants, the excellence, yet simplicity of living, its health and hospitality, rendered the stay both profitable and agreeable. Well do I remember those Sunday mornings, when, with the little Winooski River on the right hand, wriggling through the ice, and with a snow-clad spur of the mountains on the left, I wended my solitary way through the cutting wind to the somewhat remote and somewhat thinly-attended little church. But the warmth, intelligence, refinement, and respectful attention of that small band of worshipers fully compensated for the atmosphere without, which often ranged below zero. It is true that a majority of the inhabitants had been educated to attend the Congregational (usually denominated the Brick Church,) where a young man of fine talents, who was my friend, administered to the large flock committed to his charge.

> How oft with him I've ranged the snow-clad hill,
> Where grew the pine-tree and the towering oak!
> And as the white fogs all the valley fill,
> And axe re-echoed to the woodman's stroke,

While frozen flakes were squeaking under foot,
And distant tinklings from the vale arise,
Upward and upward still the way we took,
As souls congenial tower toward the skies.

We talked of things which did beseem the place,
Matters of moment to the Church and State,
The upward, downward progress of the race,
Predestination, Destiny, and Fate,
He tracked the thoughts of Calvin or of Kant,
Such lore as from his learned sire he drew;
I searched the tomes of D'Oyley and of Mant,
Or sipped the sweetness of Castalian dew.
So when the mountain path grew dim to view,
And woollen tippets were congealed or damp,
Swift to the vale our journey we renew,
Relight the fire, and trim the student's lamp.

Ordinary occurrences impress themselves more deeply, associated with scenes whose features are so grand. A conversation with a friend will be remembered with greater accuracy if it be made upon the mountain or in the storm; and not with less devotion does the heart respond to the worship of God, if his holy temple be builded among scenes of beauty; if it have no pillars but the uncarved rocks, no rafters but the sunbeams, and no dome but the skies. Thus, while residing on the mountains, I kept on the tablets of memory an unwritten diary, from which it is pleasant to draw forth an occasional leaf.

It was in the month of January, when the boreal breath is so keen, after such a walk with my

friend to the summit of the mountain, that I returned at nightfall to my chamber, with my camlet cloak and hat completely covered with snow. The flakes were large, starry, and disposed themselves in the shape of crystals. After much stamping of the feet, shaking the cloak, and thumping with a drum-like sound upon the hat, I began to stuff into the box-stove (for nothing but Russian stoves will keep you warm in Vermont) a plenty of maple-wood which abounds in those regions, and which, after hickory, makes the most delightful fire in the world. Then, having dried my damp feet, looked reflectingly into the coals, answered the tea-bell, and, as a mere matter of course, drank a cup of the weed called tea, I returned to my solitary apartment, snuffed the candles, laid out a due quantity of ruled "Sermon paper," wiped the rusty steel pens, and began to reflect, What theme will be most appropriate for the season? Let me examine the Lessons—let me see if I can find some sentiment in the Epistle or Gospel for the day, on which it will be proper to enlarge. Such search in the Prayer Book is never in vain. The course is marked out—the path clear. For not more equally is the natural year distinguished by day and night, cold and heat, storm and sunlight, winter and spring, sum-

mer and autumn, than is the "Year of our Lord" by times and seasons, which are the events in His lifetime, and which are the very periods by which to direct our course. If in this work-day world the daily service of the sanctuary cannot be attended, let the devout Christian, let the earnest Churchman, at least read, mark, learn, and inward ly digest, those daily lessons which the Church, through Holy Writ, teaches.

Scarce had I disposed myself for an evening's work, when I was called on with a request to perform funeral services on the next day, over the body of a poor Irish laborer, killed suddenly on the line of the rail-road by the blasting of rocks.

The priest was absent; for although there was a numerous body, perhaps several hundred Irish Catholics in that vicinity, he came only once in six weeks. During the interval those poor people were left without shepherd; and as they had a regard for the decencies of Christian burial, they sometimes, as on this occasion, requested the Church clergyman to be at hand. I willingly consented to do what appeared a necessary charity, although I apprehended, and afterward learned, that the more rigid and disciplined of the faith were indignant, and kept away from the funeral rites, which they almost considered profane.

Nor could I disrespect their scruples, considering the principles whence they grew.

The snow fell all night to the depth of several feet, and when the morrow dawned, the wind blew a hurricane, filling the air with fine particles of snow, and making the cold intense. Muffling myself, as well as possible, I proceeded two miles to the Irish shanty where the deceased lay, which was filled to its utmost capacity with a company of respectful friends and sincere mourners. It was indeed, a comfortless abode; but for the poor man who reposed there in his pine coffin, it was as good a tenement as the most sumptuous palace ever reared. When I see the dead going from an abode like this, the thought comes up that perhaps they have lost little, and are gaining much; that the grave over which the grass grows, and the trees wave, and the winds murmur, is, after all, a peaceful haven and a place of rest. But when they go from marble halls and splendid mansions, the last trappings appear a mockery, and I think only of what they have left behind.

Standing in one corner of that small cabin among the sobbing relatives, while the winds of winter howled without their requiem of the

departed year, I began to read the Church's solemn office for the dead :

"I am the Resurrection and the life, saith the Lord ; he that believeth in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live ; and whosoever liveth and believeth in Me shall never die."

Having completed the reading of those choral words, which form the opening part of the order for burial, and the magnificent and inspiring words of St. Paul, the procession was formed at the door of the hovel and we proceeded on foot.

The wind-storm raged violently, so that you could scarce see, by reason of the snowy pillar, while the drifts were sometimes up to your knees. The walk was most dreary. On either hand the mountains lifted their heads loftily, covered to the summit with snows ; the pine trees and evergreens which skirted the highway, presented the spectacle of small pyramids ; every weed which the foot struck was glazed over ; and the bushes, in the faint beams of the struggling light, sparkled with gems. In a wild, Titanic defile, gigantic icicles hung from the oozing rocks ; and as we passed a mill stream, we had the sight of a frozen water-fall, arrested in its descent, and with

all its volume, spray, and mist, as if by the hand of some enchanter changed suddenly into stone.

All these objects, in my walks through the mountains, had impressed their lessons of the magnificence and glory of God. But what new ideas did the same scenes suggest, associated as they were with this wintry funeral!

At last we arrived at the place of graves. It was an acclivity of the mountain; a small field surrounded by a rude fence, in one corner of which were erected many wooden crosses; and a pile of sand, or rather of sandy frozen clods, dug out with a pickaxe, and cast upon the surrounding snows, indicated the spot of this new sepulture. There was not a single marble erected, not a monument of brown stone, or epitaph; but the emblem of the cross alone denoted that it was the resting-place of the lowliest of the lowly—of the poor sons of Erin, the hewers of wood and drawers of water, who had from time to time, in these distant regions, given up their lives to toil, to suffering, or to crime. But the mountain in which they were buried was itself a monument which, without any distinction, in a spot where all were equal, was erected equally for all. There is no memorial, even of the greatest, so good as the place in which they repose; and when I looked at the

Sinai-like peak which rose before us, I thought that these poor people had, in their depth of poverty, resorted to the very God of nature to memorize their dead.

But I must not forget to notice, by way of memorial, the history of that poor man. He was one of those who lived by the sweat of the brow. By digging and delving in the earth: by bearing heavy burdens, and performing dangerous work, he obtained a living by hard labor, "betwixt the day-light and dark;" and while the famine was raging in his own land, like many of his race who exhibit the same noble generosity and devotion, (what an example to those of loftier rank!) he had carefully saved his earnings and transmitted them to his relatives. They arrived too late. His father and mother had already died of starvation; but his only sister had scarce reached the doors of this poor man's hovel, after so long a journey, when, as she awaited anxiously his return that evening, from his daily work, the litter which contained his body arrived at the door!

I reflected upon this little history, as we approached the grave upon the mountain side, and, melancholy as the scene was, with the snows drifting upon our uncovered heads, I would not have exchanged the good which it did my soul,

for the warmest and best-lighted chamber where revelry abounds; and as I repeated those most touching words, "O Lord, God most holy, O Lord, most mighty, O holy and most merciful Saviour, deliver us not into the bitter pains of eternal death," I thought that the surrounding gloom was itself suggestive of hope to the Christian soul. In a few months more, the mountains would again be clothed with verdure, and the little hills would rejoice on every side. As the winds died away into vernal gales, as the icicles fell from the rocks, as the snows vanished, they would be succeeded by the voice of the blooming and beautiful earth, with all its forest choirs, prolonging the chant of thanksgiving. How much more should the body of him, which now lay cold in its grave, with the clods and the snows of the mountains piled upon it, awake to a sure, and, it was to be hoped, a joyous resurrection. With such cheering thoughts we hurried away from the spot, when the service was ended, humbly praying that a portion of consolation might be conveyed to the heart of her, who, in a strange land, mourned the loss of an only brother. *In pace requiescat.*

ST. PETER'S, AT ROSENDALE.

A Sketch.

IN a pretty village, which we will call Rosendale, situated in about 40° North Latitude, stands a little church, upon whose gilded weathercock is inscribed the date of 1785. This is a long distance to look back upon in a country where antiquity is only comparative, and St. Peter's is accordingly gazed at with veneration as a relic of the olden time. It has been little modified by successive generations, because the peculiarity of its details is such as to admit of no change but demolition. The same rude key which was originally the work of the village blacksmith, is still applied to the lock, and you

may turn it half a dozen times either to the right or to the left, without injury, until by some lucky twist, or acquired knack, or violent wrench, you manage to shoot the bolt, and get the church open. To lock the door is a work of like trouble, and requires patience. Having entered, you will be struck by its contrast with the comfortable, lounging tabernacles of modern times. You will be reminded of the sterner and severer habits which prevailed a hundred years ago, when congregations were not lulled on cushioned seats in comfortable attitudes, and when the heated air of furnaces did not induce a sleepy frame, but the men sat upright in their overcoats with many capes, and the women in their mufflers, while the old ladies indulged in small footstoves which they brought with them, and which the sexton replenished with a few live hickory coals or with some hot ashes. The same box-stove remained in the corner, and its unseemly pipe, which had distilled black pools in divers places, supported by wires, was conducted over the aisles through a tin plate in the window-frame. The spirit of devotion must have waxed warm in old times, and did not at any rate depend upon summer heat for its existence and vitality. But while the outward aspect of things continued stern, there

was a remissness like that which has been described as appertaining to St. Donothin. It was perhaps rather from apathy than from reverence that matters remained *in statu quo.* The worshippers at St. Peter's were rather listless. A few descendants of the old set occupied their seats, and their old-fashioned carriages might be seen on a Sunday under the elms and locusts.—Their responses were very feeble, and you might almost expect to hear them pray for the king and royal family. Indeed the British arms had never been taken down, but were emblazoned on a showy tablet, and together with the Creed and Ten Commandments and the Lord's Prayer, occupied a place on the wall within the chancel. This was owing to no monarchical tendency in Episcopal Institutions, as some were disposed to argue; it only showed the disposition of the people to remain *in statu quo.* The shingles on the roof were shrunken, the lintels of the door were decayed, the window-glass had lost its transparency, owing to the action of the sun upon it for so many years, and seemed to be in need of washing, the putty had nearly all fallen away—in short, all the fixtures were sadly out of repair. The bell too was cracked, and it made a doleful noise whether on a feast-day or at a funeral,

when the sexton tolled the age of the deceased. It had a new rope, however, which was the only new thing about the church. At the corners of the building, just underneath the eaves, there were four little cisterns not made with hands, where the drippings and droppings of the sanctuary had worn away a place among the stones and pebbles. There were little narrow pathways in the grave-yard which the feet of the different generations kept bare amidst the rank grass, leading to some well-remembered burial spots where people of note reposed. Every Sunday these were visited by loiterers whom curiosity enticed, and who liked to examine the death's heads, or cherubic faces, and read y^e^ queer inscriptions and elegiac verses over whose letters the green moss had grown.

There was a little country tavern immediately opposite, which lay on the post road or main route of travel, and during summer, every Sunday a few wayfarers, who had stopped on Saturday night, would remain over because it was impossible to get any farther on their journey. These frequently came to church in the morning, and some of them were devout, and some not. The latter could pivot about on their heels during the reading of Divine service, and not

always pay a strict attention to the sermon of the Rector, but they would drop a little silver into the plate—and for the rest, they would wander in the church yard, throwing handsfull of clover to stray goats, and they afforded as much amusement to the attendants at St. Peter's as the latter did to them. They were responsible to God alone on the score of their piety, but to every decent man for the depravity of their manners I do not mean to say that they ever behaved themselves in such a way as to demand the attention of the sexton, but that was a worse misdemeanor which was only sufficiently marked to excite contempt. There is no place in which the gentleman is more evident than in the house of God. St. Peter's derived little benefit from strangers, as will appear in the course of this narrative. Fortunately or unfortunately, the direct line which engineers draw between points, has now left the little village two or three miles a-one-side the beaten track, the steam whistle and rumbling cars are heard in the distance, the grass grows greener which skirts the highways, the narrow paths which conducted to so many pilgrimages are almost lost to sight by the growth of ferns and underwood, while Rosendale is visited no more. But although shut out

from the notice of the world, and containing so little to deserve attention, it may be worth while after all to treasure up a few particulars in the jejune history of this ancient parish, because it is unhappily a type of so many, that it would defy the most jealous suspicion to detect the original.

There are several plain tablets on the walls of the church in memory of wardens, and a few to commemorate the virtues of former rectors. There are no inscriptions to the latter within fifty years, for the present incumbent had been that length of time in office, a remarkable fact in modern ecclesiastical history. It does not seem to suit the temper of the times to welcome patriarchs in pulpits. The silvery head was once a crown of glory, but now the almond flourishes in vain. At least we think that a want of reverence is to be attributed to the precipitancy of affairs. It is too true that the clergy become superannuated at an early age, are soon placed upon the sick list, are regarded humdrum on account of their growing peculiarities, and are perhaps set aside for some florid and youthful orator who is in the ascendant. Sometimes worried to death in the pastures where they are feeding a scanty flock, they are glad to take refuge

in their Master's sheepfold on the other side of Jordan, and beyond this vale of tears.

Father Wimbles had no occasion to complain of his people. He was comfortably situated, and wonderfully let alone. The parsonage was an old-fashioned building, with a stack of chimneys in the middle, and its eaves were at the height of a man's head from the ground ;—pretty dilapidated it is true, with a good crop of green moss upon the roof, and with many decayed shingles, but by the aid of a little patching now and then, kept very habitable. A couple of great willow trees drooped over it with their pendent boughs, which though deformed by the rough handling of many tempests, and by many splintered limbs, were ornamental where they stood, and sheltering the house from the sun, and partly hiding it by their curtains of tender green, caused it to have the appearance of a most pleasant retreat. At the top of a perpendicular ladder just under the roof, old Mr. Wimbles had his study. The floors were piled with manuscripts of a saffron color. A whole body of Divinity was on the shelf, and many dry skeletons of sermons lay about, amid the dust of antiquity, or the flowers and ferns of a newer literature. Here were reports and pamphlets, and bones of forgotten con-

troversies, tracts and primers, and half-gone prayer books, odd volumes from libraries, Bibles with the book of Genesis or Revelation lost. Into this little sanctuary good Mr. Wimbles used to ascend with alacrity when a young man, to get beyond the sound of his crying babies, and he still crawled into it now that he was old, as into some well remembered dovecote, for the purpose of overhauling his musty papers, or of trifling with the stumps of pens. He was not a man of much order, but his papers were all here deposited, of whatever kind, and after a deal of rummaging when wanted, he was able to find them. Though he had to shuffle the whole set, it was a job which he went through every day for some purpose or other, and he took pleasure in doing it. He had no schedules; his effects were not enumerated in catalogue, nor classified by Arabic numbers, or by Roman characters, nor according to bulk, nor stored away in particular depositories. A little of every kind was found every where. Ledgers, prayer books and Lectures were bound up in company; a roll of receipts would fall out of a cylinder of newspapers. He would stand upon tip-toe on a chair, and reach after a package, bringing down the loose fluttering leaves of catechisms, and a shower of

dust upon his head, or hunt diligently on hands and knees in a corner, or poke his head into a closet to find some suitable discourse which he well remembered to have composed forty years ago, on the setting up of a new organ, or on the occasion of a funeral. What he had written, he had written. All was as good as span new, for although the moth, the mould, the grease, the ink-blots, and a chemic action may have marred the page, the cheering Christian thoughts were arrested in their flight, glowing as brightly as ever with the piety of their author, and most invaluable because his eyes had become weak.. Also any of the aforesaid skeletons, or preparations, heads or dry bones of controversy, which with a little brushing up were as available as ever, he could lay hold of after a careful scrutiny, and string them together again, bone coming unto bone, and sinews binding them and flesh covering them, and still the resurrection of spiritual things went on in that dark chamber, whenever he waved the feathery wand of his neglected quill. It was sometimes indeed difficult to produce order out of this confusion, for where any text bore a relationship as near as that of second or third cousin to another, the good man had from time to time taken a part of what be-

longed to one, and bestowed it upon another, which seemed to have an equal right to it. Thus there were heads with half a dozen bodies, and bodies with half a dozen heads, and a great deal of loose rhetorical apparel, which might be slipped on anywhere, and fitted easily. Of Simeon I believe, or some such author, there were many outlines of discourses, filled up in pencil, and lying all about, but if Simeon could have perceived how his labors had been completed, he might have exclaimed as did his namesake, "Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace." Saint *Statu Quo*, if there is any such saint, might well deserve a niche in the little study, for full as it was, there was still room for *statu*-ary or anything else. It already contained other articles than books, pamphlets, choked-up inkstands, and Mr. Wimbles' green eye-shade. There were parcels of dried catnip, beans, peppers, and a pair of old saddle bags, besides numerous other matters of which the inventory is not made out. I must not forget to mention an antique sofa, covered originally with hair-cloth, but the latter completely worn out. The brass-headed tacks had also lost their lustre. On this Mr. Wimbles loved to lounge, and read newspapers and the old divines. He would come in

from his garden, panting and wheezing, crawl up his ladder, stretch himself out, and fairly groan with the pleasure given to his relaxed limbs. A recumbent attitude was the most agreeable to him, and had been even when a young man. He was always leaning on his elbows, propping himself up on one kind of support or other, so as to relieve his spine and vertebræ, but the moment that he came into a house, and espied a lounge or sofa, he would fling himself down with a faint sigh, and loll, and roll, and lounge, and change his position as if to assuage his fatigue, complaining all the time that he was tired, and getting a deal of sympathy from the gentler sex, who placed cushions beneath his head. This habit he laid to the score of bodily infirmity in order to rebut the charge of laziness, which was from time to time insinuated in a mild manner against him. He said he was not lazy, God forbid, but he had sufferings, of which he said nothing. In fact, he had accomplished nothing while standing on his legs, and thought on his back only.

To come down from Mr. Wimbles' little study under the eaves, the furniture of his honse was very plain and primitive. The lofty head of pride would scarce enter under the narrow doorways or beneath the low ceilings; it would find

no glittering display of silver plate to feed its eyes upon in the corner cupboards, and the apparatus of luxurious living was not to be found. At least a spirit of humility breathed in the humble chambers, and the house itself was no unbecoming possession for a minister of Christ. This weak aspect of poverty was a strong bulwark for Father Wimbles, more than all his bodily infirmities, and had stood him in stead during all his ministry, for it represented the poverty of spirit. There was not a pretentious sign about the man or his possessions. Poor people were not afraid to step upon his homespun carpets, or to sit upon his rush chairs, or to look upon the few common ornaments which were strewed around. They were the same as those which graced their own habitations. If his chairs were rickety, and those upon rockers, of which he had several, creaked audibly, they had supported his back well during his day and generation. The most sumptuous upholstery would not have secured such lasting comfort. An ambition for external elegance will sometimes creep into places which ought to be lowly, until they resemble as little as possible the Son of Man's habitation. When the popular young preacher has become a petted idol, and the admiring con-

gregation hangs upon his lips, his mansion must be adorned with rosewood and splendid with damask. The old church must be pulled down about his ears, and a more expensive if not more suitable structure, erected. Mr. Wimbles aspired to no such change. Let the aged parson who sustains his position with tolerable firmness, emulate his example, and seek not to demolish, to erect, or to re-model churches. He will be apt himself to fall with the plaster, and not long to survive a new coat of paint or the purchase of a new set of prayer books. Let him not remove his household goods, no matter if his roof is green with mosses, and the uneven ceilings threaten to fall in, else will the sentence go forth against him, "Let his habitation be desolate, and his bishopric let another take."

Mr. Wimbles had married in his early days a wife well suited to him. She was exceedingly plain in appearance, economical and saving even to a fault, and prepared yearly for the "bee" or "spinning visit," with infinite zeal and alacrity. She differed much from the wives of many rectors now-a-days. While some are too stylish, gay, and brisk, wanting that nice sense and appreciation of their position which will incite them to walk humbly, others in their desire to

do good are too pressing and importunate. Mrs. Wimbles did not indulge in extravagant dress—neither did she spend much of her time in Dorcas Societies, nor was she President, or Directress, or Secretary of half a dozen Societies. Perhaps she might have been more zealous without mischief, but it must be said of her that she attended strictly to her domestic duties, nor did any false report proceed from her tongue. When she came into church on a Sunday, it was as if she walked still beneath a low ceiling. She scarcely spoke above her breath, and she said not much, and that to scarcely any one. Somehow or other she was always alluded to as "poor Mrs. Wimbles," as her husband was called "poor Mr. Wimbles," nor did either appear to repudiate the kind of sympathy involved therein. On this account they received many little gifts which would not have come to hand if they had adopted a more stiff demeanor, timely additions to their stuff and store which were given because they had the air of wanting them, and which were always acknowledged with a deep sigh of satisfaction.

For instance, on one occasion Mr. Wimbles met with a pecuniary loss which became known. Not that he had missed out of his pocket a gold

piece, nor suffered in bank stocks, for it was not to be presumed that he had any, but an overwhelming misfortune overtook him in the loss of his cow. A horn-distemper prevailed extensively in the neighbourhood, and one day, before the dew was off the ground, the maid went out with a little bench and milk pail, expecting to fill the latter with the precious syllabub, when to her surprise she found the creature lying dead in the field. She returned with the unexpected tidings, and the whole parsonage, from kitchen to cock-loft, was filled with lamentation. Mr. Wimbles was not out of bed, but the moment that he was informed of it, he uttered a deep, bass groan, and rolled upon his side as if his mental energy was gone. His good wife and the rest of the household adjourned to the departed cow. Alas! her udders could no longer yield the life-giving fluid which was almost the support of the family. Poor as his living was, it was a luxury which he could not well put away. And to buy another animal—it was among the things impossible. At least he thought so.

But the intelligence was not long confined to the parochial estate. The grief of the household knew no such bounds. It was wafted abroad, and was a bit of local news which excited an in-

terest for the time more absorbing than wars or politics. It ran all about the parish swift as a spark on a telegraphic wire, it was passed from mouth to mouth, "Mr. Wimbles' cow is dead. Mr. Wimbles' cow is dead." "And what is it you say?" each new comer would exclaim—"is it possible? what is it that you say?" and still the answer would be returned, "Mr. Wimbles' cow is dead." Frugal housewives lifted up their hands, and farmers shook their heads in silence, and then a low muttered feeling began to escape, and to deepen as it rolled along—"Poor Mr. Wimbles! Poo-r Mr. Wimbles! Poo-oo-oo-r Mr. Wimbles!" It reached the parsonage, and was a token of substantial good.

There is no loss which can be mentioned which excites a more tearful, touching sympathy in a neighbourhood than that of a poor man's cow. His whole farm might be consumed by a mortgage, and his roof vanish over his head, while the unfortunate balance against him would call for no reparation at all. It is a cold matter of business, an every day affair, and though it might add a few furrows to his brow, and make his hair turn gray, he would be left to struggle alone in the deep vale of poverty, and master his troubles as he could. Nay, he might even lose

his wife, and it would be referred to with the ordinary common-places of regret, like all irreparable things; but it is ten to one if it would elicit nearly as much condolement in his behalf as the death of his new milch-cow. The gentle domestic creature which stands at his door and gives forth her pure life current day by day from her veins, to support his wife and little children with the sweetest and most natural nourishment in the world, is represented in the very fore-ground of the picture, and associated with the comforts of his home. And when a poor man is the victim in such a case, it is as when a babe is forcibly torn away from the breast.

Shortly after this event, the parson was standing in his slippers after breakfast, and looking out of the window, when he saw a little boy advancing up the lane, flourishing in his hand a little bough, and driving——

"My dear," said he to his wife, "come hither. The Lord be praised, but here comes, unless my eyes deceive me,"—and at the same time he wiped his spectacles—"here, here, here,—yes, some kind person,—in answer to prayer,—has sent us a fine cow." At the same moment, the gate was thrown open, and any doubt which might have distressed his mind was dissipated

when the creature was driven in. Mr. Wimbles hunted in the closet, and selected a pair of shoes, (they were the ones in which he was wont to walk about the glebe,) but he had scarce had time to tie the strings, when a slight knocking, made by the knuckles of the little boy, was heard at the door.

"Come in," said Mrs. Wimbles, in a sharp, cracked voice, which was denotive of welcome.

"Good morning, Peter, my fine boy," said Mr. Wimbles, his whole face lighting up with a glow of cordiality, "and how are all the friends at the homestead? All com-fort-able? Is Aunt Sally's lameness better?"

"Quite well, I thank'ee, sir. My master told me to hand you this."

The good parson took the letter, and read—

"My Dear Sir:

"I have lately heard that you have had the misfortune to lose your valuable cow by the prevailing distemper. We have one to spare, which you will please accept, with best wishes, from

"Your old friend,

"P. P."

"Well really," said Mr. Wimbles.

"Well really," said Mrs. Wimbles.

"This is too much."

"This is too much."

"My dear," said the rector hurriedly, "tell Jemima to give her immediately three quarts of bran—wife, I said *immediately*—and to cut up the large pumpkin—"

"Yes, yes."

"And—and—do not be in a hurry—and to cut up some of those potato parings. My dear—"

"Yes, yes."

"Where are my pens? I can never find them. Surely it is incumbent on me to write a line of acknowledgment to my most excellent Christian friend for all his favours to the Lord's unworthy servant. Peter, my child, sit down."

Mr. Wimbles got hold of the stump of an old pen, put water into his inkstand, stirred up the dregs with a piece of stick, and sitting down poured out his soul in acknowledgment to his benefactor, calling down all temporal and spiritual blessings on his head, and praying that he might be blest abundantly, both in his basket and his store, and finally be crowned with life everlasting. He sealed the document with a piece of wafer, patted the docile Peter on the

head, presented him with a tract and an old copy of the Church Catechism, after which he went out to look at the cow. Thus the loss of the worthy parson resulted in his gain, and the drying up of one fountain only caused another to be opened, and the milk of human kindness to flow freely forth.

The kind and sympathetic nature of the good man was one element also in his success, if to remain in *statu quo* might be called success. He lent a willing and attentive ear to all woes and the relation of them, from the death of friends to the attacks of rheumatism. He would sit or rather loll by the hour, with his cane in his hand, hearkening to the narrative of old ladies, and occasionally heaving a sigh or uttering a low groan denotive of sympathy, now and then perhaps interposing a few consolatory words with reference to the Lord's goodness or mercy, and to make it clear to their minds that all things eventually worked together for good. He would lift his hands, while his eyes seemed to beam with sincerity and good will, saying in an affectionate tone, "the Lord bless you," or "God keep you," with an emotion which carried all hearts. His easy and accessible ways made him a great

favorite with old ladies, who always welcomed his arrival, and would say when he departed after a protracted visit, "What a good man is Mr. Wimbles! He would be greatly missed if he should be taken away." On funeral occasions no one was considered equally comforting. The forgetfulness of old age made him unable to treasure up men's failings, while his abundant charity caused him to have a lively reminiscence of all the virtues of the deceased, and to set them forth in such an account as to leave a most grateful impression on the minds of surviving friends. It was thought that he extolled many beyond their deserts, and so encouraged doubtful livers in a state of complacency by his ill-timed eulogies. "Help, Lord," he would cry out in despairing accents, as he stood among the mourning friends, "for the faithful are minished from among the children of men." Albeit the subjects had been far from saints or were unquestioned sinners, good Mr. Wimbles gained no enemies by such a course, but rather incurred the kind opinion of many friends. He who is blind to another's failings, may meet with some apology for his own. Thus did the course of his life flow along quite smoothly in old age, and he passed many quiet

hours every day in his study beneath the eaves, making searches among his faded manuscripts, and fitting the odds and ends of sermons ingeniously together. His parish was not divided, nor the minds of his people embittered by party strifes. When he went to the Convention, it was with a feeling of unalloyed pleasure, not to a scene of warfare and unhappy excitement. His presence was hailed with acclamation, and he received honour, if on no other account, at least for his age and gray hairs. The presbyters would see him coming, and run to grasp him by both hands, and he was pointed out as the eldest clergyman in the diocese, and looked upon as one who had worn himself out in his Master's service. He received congratulatory visits, he was invited to elegant and hospitable tables. Father Wimbles was delighted with such attentions, but very glad to return to his own quiet home, and to remain in *statu quo*. The lintels of the church were still unrepaired, the old key sufficed for the lock, and was still able to open the door. He had pursued the even tenor of his way; he had met with no check because he had encouraged no change, and sought for no innovation. On one occasion only, a few nails had been driven, and

the sound of a hammer was heard within the church. The consequence was a slight disturbance of the atmosphere around St. Peter's. An account of this is given in what follows.

THE SQUARE PEW.

ALTHOUGH St. Peter's church was very small, (perhaps a hundred such might be piled up beneath the dome of St. Peter's at Rome, without encroaching much upon the space within,) its internal fixtures were massive, bulky, and unproportioned to its size. The area was subdivided into square and high-backed pews, with the exception of a small space in the rear appropriated to coloured people. An inconve nience arose from this, that the ground was monopolized by a few families, and if occasion should arise, seats could not be procured in a half empty church, for love nor money. Newcomers however had been very scarce, until on a certain season when an epidemic raged in the

cities, a large number of families came into the neighbourhood, and there was an unwonted demand for pews in St. Peter's. None could be btained. Mr. Bullfinch, a rich man, who had taken a house for the summer, was attached to the church, and wished a place in which to seat his family. The sexton applied the key to the rusty lock, and let him into the antiquated building, bnt could give him no information. He walked up and down the aisles, but cushions and prayer books appeared to indicate that every spot was pre-occupied, and strangers must throw themselves on the hospitality of those already installed. It is an unpleasant expedient, however, arriving early, to anticipate the rightful owner, or later, to disturb his devotions, to oust him from his accustomed seat, or if you have ventured to take it, perhaps be politely requested to retire. The latter circumstance could never occur at St. Peter's, but it is by no means unusual now-a-days in city churches. You may have seen the proud pew-holder enter the costly and luxurious temple where the light subdued shines down through Gothic windows on a fashionable crowd, with head erect stalk through the aisle, not with the air of one who goes to worship God, when lo! arrived at his own door, he halts and knits his

brows, and frowns with positive disgust. A stranger kneels, and scarce to the Lord's prayer has time to say *Amen*, when he is coolly beckoned out, told in a hurried whisper that he has made some mistake, confused and blushing finds himself in the aisle without chart or compass, and through the crowd of worshippers, many of whom look askew from their prayer books on the stray sheep, he gets out of the enclosure, and draws a long breath in the free and open air of the portico.

Until the sittings in churches are made free, an experiment which has been profitably tried in some quarters, it is desirable to have your own pew, though the rent of it may cost as much as that of a house. Mr. Bullfinch wanted a whole pew for himself and family at St. Peter's, otherwise he should be forced to worship God with the Methodists. "God forbid!" said the old sexton, who was truly sorry that a new family should be driven from the church, "but if you will call on good Mr. Wimbles, the Rector, who lives in the old house by the big willows, he without doubt will tell you where you may be comfortably seated. Here is room enough and to spare. We are not half full, Sir, not half full, and have not been this forty years. When I was

a young man the aisles were crowded, but times are not the same. They have built new churches, the old folks are many of them dead, the young people go West. Those who remain are not very attentive to public worship. I am afraid they like the tavern better."

Mr. Bullfinch took the sexton's direction, and in a few minutes arrived at the Rectory. The first person whom he met was Mrs. Wimbles, broom in hand, who asked him to walk in, and going to the foot of the stairs, she called in a feeble voice, "Mr. Wimbles, Mr. Wimbles, please to come down," and immediately retired.

The Rector was on his knees, fumbling among some old papers for the latter part of a sermon on the "Shortness of Life," which he was positively certain that he could lay his hands on, in fact he was just getting on the track of it, and found some leaves 'dove-tailed' into a funeral discourse. The good man in answer to the summons came hobbling down the ladder from his attic study, with his green eye-shade over his brow, and his spectacles over his eye-shade. He talked very volubly with the stranger on a variety of topics, called to mind and told anecdotes of many persons now in their graves, found that the track of his acquaintance ran very much athwart

that of Mr. Bullfinch's, but he could give no precise information such as the stranger wanted. He would see to it that he was comfortably provided for—he was very happy to know that he had come to reside in the parish. Bullfinch went away, and Mr. Wimbles sat down to an exceedingly economical dinner, and thought no more of the matter.

On Sunday, however, when Mr. Bullfinch again pressed it under peril of going over to the Methodists, an informal meeting was held after service, when it appeared that every pew had an owner; yet to lose this family from sheer neglect, when there was vacant space enough to accommodate a hundred Bullfinches, struck the Vestry, or at least those of them who were present, as quite unpardonable. The thought dimly gleamed upon their minds that the presence of the new-comers might give a start to the parish which had so long remained *in statu quo*. What was to be done? Would Mr. Bullfinch consent to sit in the gallery? He would not do it. Had he not long sat under the ministration of a very eloquent preacher in the city, at St. Titus', where he had purchased a pew near the chancel end, and furnished it with soft cushions and costly prayer books? Could he be asked to take his

seat with "*the blacks*" in the worship of God?—The thought was too preposterous to be entertained for a moment. Was there any family who would voluntarily relinquish their places for a season for the good of the church? To find out would take a long time, and it would be necessary to canvass the parish. As for those present, they were so situated that they were unable to do it. In the mean time the doors of the Methodist meeting-house stood a-gape, and although the throng was very great, they always opened a way for any stranger. If there was no room for Mr. Bullfinch, they would "make room," such were the words which several of the brethren had been heard to utter. At last, an expedient was resolved upon, and a vestryman consented to take upon himself the responsibility of the matter. They would divide one of the square pews in the middle of the church into two pews. There was a decrepid old lady who lived in a house hard by with a still more decrepid daughter, of whom she was the faithful nurse. Maria had been bed-ridden for many years, and her mother was a widow. Aunt Polly, (such was the affectionate title by which she was known among the country-people) might be always seen at her window industriously knitting. She had been a constant attendant

at St. Peter's during the whole course of Mr. Wimbles' ministrations, and her recollection extended many years beyond that into the times of preceding rectors, whose good qualities and attentions she could call to mind, when questioned thereon, in many a lively narrative. For her, poor soul, the church was her great stand-by, and her all. Her whole heart was set upon it;—you might engage her in what course of conversation you would, but she would still recur to this, and she loved to talk about the church, and nothing else—the church, the church, the church. Yet the spirit which animated her was not the spirit of those who with a blind bigotry cry out on all occasions "The Temple of the Lord." Her life was altogether devout and religious. The reading of the Bible, and a few good books containing some of the pith and marrow of old divines, which however well thumbed and often perused, retained their freshness and interest for her, and her devotions, took up a large portion of every day, while not industriously employed for her support, but the worship of the sanctuary afforded her the greatest comfort, and was looked forward to during the whole week. She always came half an hour before service, found the lessons for the day, and during sermon never once

took her eyes off Mr. Wimbles, no matter how prolix he might be.

Aunt Polly had also, however, in her composition, as was natural, a little spice of worldly pride. Poor and humble as she was, it revealed itself, in an unobtrusive way, and peeped out occasionally from the midst of many Christian qualities. Her grandfather was one of the first wardens of the church, while her great-grandfather was an English soldier who had spilt his blood while the colony was yet young. In her little sanded parlour his portrait hung upon the wall over the mantel-piece, an oil painting, the only ornament in her house, with the exception of a little shell-work, some needle-work, and a few prints. Her family had not always dwelt in the low vale of poverty ; she had a little of the sentiment which trickles along from age to age with a few drops of what is called good blood.

For the first time it was deemed unreasonable that one who came alone should take up so much room, when a single seat would suffice her under the circumstances ; she who had hitherto been welcome was considered an intruder, and in consulting where to make the change in the pew, the lot fell upon the property of Aunt

Polly. No intimation was given by the vestryman, but a carpenter was sent for, and after the shavings had been swept away, and some paint put on, the place indeed looked like a new patch upon an old garment. When the contractor went to inspect the work after its completion, a feeling of compunction might well have touched his heart, if it had been capable of any. The deed of which he had been guilty by its very nature fell under that class of robberies symbolized by the poor man's one little ewe lamb. Why of all others should the humble tenant be disturbed in her well-loved possession, when she had a prescriptive right by long tenure and by unfailing attendance? Judge A., Squire B., and Colonel C. occupied their places but a small part of the year. They were out of the County on business, they were absent at the Courts, they were seeking their health at watering-places. At long intervals they would come on a sunshiny morning, but never when the weather promised to be foul. Books and cushions a-plenty were in their pews, but the owners kept aloof from them. An intrusion in their church domain would be like a mere poaching upon vacancy, yet their sacred square property was inviolably preserved, nor was the idea for a moment entertained of even brushing

away the dust which rested upon their gilded Bibles. There was something even sacred in the defenceless right of Aunt Polly, for it was guarded by the feebleness of old age, and it resisted encroachment by the pathetic appeals of Christian mercy. He who tramples down barriers of this kind will gain nothing, for the church at least.

The Sunday dawned calm and beautiful, the bells rang, and the church-going people flocked in. The doors of the hospitable Methodist meeting-house invited the wayfarers, and the usual thin congregation was straggling toward St. Peter's. The old lady had been up bright and early, reading her prayer-book in advance, and carefully marking down the places, a process which she always repeated after reaching church. Her 'kerchief, her snuff-box, and her tidy bonnet, lay on a table, but she was a little behind-hand on the present occasion, and the bell had ceased to toll. Maria had been very nervous and peevish, and almost refused to be left alone, but being consoled by the amusement of a volume of Fox's Book of Martyrs, filled with pictures of blazing stakes and the sufferings of holy men, she at last kindly gave permission to her aged parent to go to church. Mr. Wimbles was already reading

the Confession in that peculiar and characteristic drawl, or rather whine, which he had adopted for the last thirty years as the best mode for the confession of sins, marring the beautiful composition at the end of every sentence with an inflection or cadence not capable of being expressed in musical notes. Aunt Polly entered as if her feet were shod in mouse-skin slippers, hugging her large prayer book in her left arm, and with her right hand feeling her way along the pews like a blind person, till she mechanically paused at her own place, and began to search for the latch. Baffled in the attempt, she advanced a little farther, then retreated, then advanced again, stopped, adjusted her spectacles on her nose, moved her head with a paralytic shake from side to side, stared fixedly, and began to grope again. At last coming to a stand-still at the identical spot where she had been accustomed to enter, a strange sight met her eyes, for her pew was dwindled to one half its size, and instead of being empty as usual, marvellous to relate, full of Bullfinches. Unable to understand the mystical change, she at last found her way into the other compartment, and sat motionless through the service, without opening her book, confused, embarrassed, and discomfited. She at first thought

that her mind was wandering, and that the time had perhaps come when it would please God to take her to his rest. When Mr. Wimbles approached the end of his long discourse, she began to recover herself a little, and to consult inquisitively the countenances of those present, as if to say, "What does all this mean?"—The congregation slipped out while she remained riveted to her seat, when the old sexton approached and solved the mystery. Aunt Polly was confounded. She said not a word, but turning around to take as if a farewell look of her beloved church, she went back sorrowfully to her humble home, and to Maria with her Book of Martyrs.

She had scarce entered when the invalid uttered a piercing scream. "Mother! mother! what ails you?"

Aunt Polly took off her bonnet, placed her prayer book beside it, sat down in a high-backed chair, and burst into tears. They were the first which had distilled from her eyes for many years. Her feelings were hurt and pained to a degree which a coarse nature could not conceive, and she bowed her head as if it longed to be pillowed in the grave. If there was any thing stable to her mind in this transitory world—if there was any privilege which she fondly hoped could not

be taken away while life endured, it was that which she had enjoyed so long, without money and without price, it is very true, but freely as if it had been her birthright, and thankfully as it was her blessing. Alas! the Sundays of the Past, so sweetly and inextricably linked, were broken from the Present, and the golden chain suspended from the skies seemed snapped forever. In vain the sun arose in gorgeous splendour, and with his first rays gilt the village spire; in vain the hushed and precious stillness of the day of rest wooed meditation.

When another week had passed away, and the bells again rang for divine service, she never left her house, but putting on her spectacles, acted as a lay reader, while herself and invalid child formed the whole congregation. Her voice trembled and became almost inaudible at the concluding prayer,—"Almighty God, who hast given us grace at this time with one accord to make our common supplications unto thee; and hast promised that when two or three are gathered together in thy Name thou wilt grant their request," &c. We must allow somewhat for the infirmities of human nature, if when the first tenderness of her unmingled grief had been in part assuaged, its remaining current were embittered

by a little anger, and an unseemly pride disturbed the equipoise of her Christian frame. In a short time she was missed from her accustomed seat, and if her presence had been little noted, her absence was more regretted. That the sexton had not been called to dig her grave, was certain, and nothing short of this would account for her continued neglect of public worship. Many who had observed her confusion on the unfortunate Sunday sincerely pitied her, and were heard to whisper "shame! shame!" as they passed out, but on Monday morning the subject escaped from their minds. As to Mr. Bullfinch, he knew nothing about it, and was responsible for the rent of his pew alone.

Mr. Wimbles at last had his attention called to the subject, and to prevent the loss of so excellent a parishioner, as well as to take upon himself the office of peace-maker, for which he was eminently fitted by the kindness of his disposition and the emolliency of his words, went to see Aunt Polly. She received him as was her wont with much favour, although she held him partly responsible for the treatment which she had experienced. In a little time, as she advanced in her woful narrative and expatiated on the cruelty which she had received at the hands of the ves-

try, how she had been driven out at her age from a church every stone of which she knew and loved—yes, from old St. Peter's, where her father was buried, and—and—and—her *grand-f'ther*—her tears spouted out again, her voice became choked, and she and Maria united in a most lamentable wail.

Mr. Wimbles took her hand in both of his, and his own eyes seemed to be moist—"My—dear—friend," said he, "My—dear—friend." The pent-up grief of his parishioner and the invalid burst out anew, and Father Wimbles found out that he had stirred up the grievous elements to a tide of mutiny, which the wand of Christian pity could scarce allay.

"My dear friend," said he, mildly patting her upon the shoulder, "it is all wrong—all wrong—all wrong."

(*Fresh grief.*)

"All wrong—all wrong—all wrong."

"To think of old St. Peter's," proceeded the old lady, "where I have gone in the summer's heat and in the winter's cold, and that sin' fifty years—to think of old Sain' Sain' Sain'—Se-h-r-r-r-Pete-oh-ah-oh-ah—Boo-oo-oo!"

"I know it, I know it, my dear old friend, it is all wrong."

"Then why did they permit it to be done?" spoke Maria sharply from her Book of Martyrs. "Why did they not turn out Job Elson? I wish I could walk, and I would go to see Mr. Pindar, if it were ten miles, to tell him what I thought of him."

Mr. Wimbles promised that although it was all wrong, he would soon make it all right, and that he would repair the injustice; that he could not lose so valuable a member from his flock, for he believed that his friend prized the church, and had listened to every word of every sermon which he had ever preached until this unhappy circumstance.

"Sir," said Aunt Polly, bridling up a little with the same improper feeling which she would at times manifest, "I will go no mum—mum—more. I was born in a square pew, and I mean to die in one."

By this form of speech, the poor old soul only meant to convey the idea that she had been accustomed to the same accommodation in church from her childhood, and that she had a right to expect it to the end of her days. Mr. Wimbles again pressed her hand in his, and in the most loving, coaxing, and affectionate tone, soothed her sorrows, and after repeated interpositions of

"all wrong," added, "My dear friend, the Lord be with you, or God bless you," or something to that effect.

Happy would it be if all parish clergymen had at least the guise of sympathy, the faculty by look, or word, or presence, to allay the wounded spirit. The stores of learning and the force of eloquence, the specious gifts which dazzle for a moment, honeyed words and silvery voice which tickle curious ears, may die in air, and bring no courage to the sick or balsam to the broken-hearted.

Shortly after this interview a way of reconciliation was naturally paved, for the epidemic subsided, November with its chilling blasts and hoar frosts drew on, and the Bullfinches, who had been nestled like unwelcome birds in the temple, took their flight to the warm and smoky atmosphere of the town, not to return to the same region any more. Their departure was not regretted, for in a parish where the subject of the Apostolic succession was not moved or quietly taken for granted, where matters of church doctrine, questions of abstruse theology, and of external usage, had never come up to excite the minds of the people, the migrating Bullfinches had brought with them the only seed of discord

yet known. As soon as they were gone, the carpenter was again sent for, who in half an hour removed the partition, and old St. Peter's stood *in statu quo*. Mr. Wimbles came down from his study beneath the eaves, took his hat and cane, and walked with more than ordinary alacrity to the home of Aunt Polly. His approach was perceived, the latch was already lifted, and the door was opened to admit his entrance.

"My—dear—friend," said he, laying on each word an equal emphasis, "the Lord bless you. Peace be with this house, and all herein; it is all right—all right—all right!"

Maria wept. The old lady threw her arms around his neck.

"Mr. Wimbles," said she, "will you *pray* with us?" Her wounded spirit felt the balmy influence of the comforting pastor, her evil feelings were assuaged, and the peeping bud of worldly pride was clipt and blasted.

"Certainly I will," replied the old man, and he dropt upon his knees, while a hearty *Amen* was responded to every petition. When he had pronounced a benediction on the invalid, and once more grasped the hand of his aged parishioner, and turned away from that humble threshold, he carried his cane in his left hand, while

with his right he involuntarily grasped in the air an imaginary shepherd's crook. He thanked God that he was still able to do his duty well, and felt as if he were on the verge of heaven. Mr. Wimbles walked faster.

Sunday came, and a few old-fashioned carriages as usual were at St. Peter's gate, and the services had commenced. An audible and well-remembered voice was heard in the responses, while several of the female members of the congregation jogged each other and whispered, "There is Aunt Polly." Mr. Wimbles was more prolix than usual, and he was gratified to see his old friend looking directly at him, apparently with the most fixed attention. Her eyes were fastened and riveted so eagerly, that it would almost have discomposed another speaker; but the good man who observed it, feeling it to be a merited tribute to his discourse, so warmed up and expanded, that some of the old people nodded, and the young thought he would never get through. At last the benediction was pronounced, and the audience slipped out. It was a quick process, the emptying of the church. Aunt Polly, however, maintained her position, as if remaining to converse with the Rector, or as if having regained

her seat in her beloved church, she was loth to leave it again. Mr. Wimbles approached.

"How are you, my dear friend?" said he, in his kindest accents.

Aunt Polly made no reply.

"I am rejoiced to see you here again," he proceeded. "We have missed you very much."

She sat bolt upright, and never stirred. The Rector put on his spectacles again. "Come hither, Mr. Connels," he said to the sexton, who was just preparing to close the door. They both looked at her, and strange as it may appear, found her dead. Shocked and amazed, Mr. Wimbles lifted up his hands. Perhaps the excitement of the occasion had been too much, and snapped the slender cord of life. Her pulse had stopped, while the heart which had lately throbbed with devotion was not yet cold. It was an impressive but a dreadful sight. The sexton lifted her light frame in his arms, and without the least monition carried her to her own house, and placed her on the bed by the side of her sick child. Maria fell into fierce convulsions, which were repeated at intervals until she died. The visitation was singular, taken in connection with all the circumstances, and communicated a shock even to the placid temperament of Mr. Wimbles

The old lady and her child were buried in the same grave, and Mr. Wimbles was so strongly impressed that he did not steal out from the house and smoke his pipe, as he was accustomed to do at funerals. He preached a sermon, and presented the character of his parishioner in glowing terms. He spoke of her piety, her attachment to the church, her devotion to her daughter, her patience, her industry, and all the Christian qualities which had distinguished her through a long life, and last of all of the Providence of God who had taken her to himself from the courts of his own house on the blessed Sabbath to a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. Mr. Wimbles always shed tears during his own discourses, and on this occasion they fell more profusely than ever, for weak as his poor client was, he felt as if a pillar of the church had fallen, and when he recalled the fixed eye-balls which glared upon him, they seemed to reproach him with his short-comings, and in their dull lustre to rebuke the lukewarm congregation as they sat unconscious in the company of the dead.

IT was the first of June :—the cold damp winds had spoiled the promise of the early May, when apple orchards are in bloom, and lingering snows upon the mountain-tops had chilled the air, when suddenly the ascending sun proclaimed his power, the leaves burst forth in all their glossy brightness, and with no intervention of the genial spring-time, summer seemed to be advanced. Enjoying much the sunshine, and the balmy air, and freshness of the morning, I was riding slowly through the Northern Highlands, scarce looking up to guide the horse upon the beaten road, enwrapped in reverie more delicious

than is known to heaven-dreaming Turks. It was the exhilaration of health, it was the balmy feeling which is distilled from the dew of the morning.

Through cedar lanes, through avenues of stately elms, or of aged locusts, the road gradually wound for several miles, until the beautiful revealment burst upon the sight of a village in a valley. It was a festival or market day; the tinkling, silvery sound of numerous bells was borne upon the breeze, and so cunningly whether by accident or design had their pitch and tone been adjusted in the casting of the metal, that as they rang out in concert, they had in blending tintinnabulation the musical effect of chimes. As the building of a church was the first thing thought of in our early settlements, so on the approach to every village the ascending spire is the first object which strikes the eye. All projects which "begin with God," (as the ancient poet has it,) are auspicious in their origin, and must be favourable in their results; and to this cause and to none other must be ascribed the uprising of so many smiling villages which are blessed with peace, plenty, and unexampled prosperity through the length and breadth of our land. But yesterday the new-risen church served

also the purpose of a fortress, the savage hovered within the sound of psalm-tunes, the minister of God brought his well-primed musket to the pulpit, while to the rolling of a drum the timorous inhabitants within the pickets came together to listen to the glad tidings. But now, how changed! Peace reigns within the walls of Zion, and plenteousness within her palaces.

At the door of the parsonage I was met by the Rector, who had seen me coming from the window of his library, and who gave me a warm grasp of his hand, while his handsome countenance glowed with a cordial welcome. He drew me into his study, which was not much like that of Father Wimbles, and it was easy to perceive at a glance that he was a man who loved order. His books, of which he had thousands, were admirably arranged in glass cases, his table was swept of rubbish, and contained only some well-wiped pens and pure white paper, his almanac hung upon the wall, and his calendar was adjusted. His letters folded lengthwise and endorsed, were arranged in piles upon a shelf, ready to be referred to. There too lay the Parish Register, and a glance at it sufficed to show that from the first it had been carefully and systematically kept. For although the early leaves had

vanished in the days of Revolution, and were sought for in vain, as the beginnings of all history are apt to be obscure, yet after that the Record knew no blemish, and any information which it ought to contain might be had. How different, I thought, is this from the books which are kept at Rosendale, and at St. Plimpton's parish. It would form the labour of a month for the best clerk to re-write and re-arrange them, and if the work were done, the documents would lose much of their value, being no more originals but mere transcripts. Thus on one page would be a record of baptisms, and the same worthy rector would turn the Register upside-down, and at the other end of it inscribe the list of burials. His successor, as a matter of necessity, would then adopt a similar course, until the materials became confusedly mixed, and the whole arrangement was destroyed. Many entries were made upon separate leaves which were pinned in, while the work was also used as a portfolio for loose parish documents. When we consider the vast importance of such records, and that after the lapse of centuries they may be eagerly sought for by those who have a right to ask them at the Church's hands, that a neglect in this respect is very common, and is a serious dereliction of

duty, it will by no means be considered out of place that I have a word of praise for the Rector's "lucid order."

It was also worth while to look at the drawers which contained his sermons, the work of ten years, all written with the blackest ink in a clear round hand on paper of the same size, duly numbered, and endorsed. As they were the result of care, study, and a ripe scholarship, they were an intellectual capital more valuable than gold. They were not indeed worn out with repetition, resorted to as the reprieve of laziness from instant labour, compositions which had been much shuffled, dove-tailed and spliced together. Therefore, with all propriety, they might be made to subserve the purpose of more occasion than one. While upon the subject, it affords me pleasure to speak particularly of my friend's sermons, because they were models in their kind, words fitly spoken, with a dignity which fitted them for the high, and a simplicity for the humble, and a genial warmth which extended to all. They were mostly textual, the natural, ingenious, and often beautiful development of one or two ideas, with apposite illustration, and an application vigorous, pungent and to the heart. Thus being strictly logical, and starting from different points,

they seldom impinged upon one another, but formed separate and independent expositions of Christian ethics, and preserved a continued freshness through the ecclesiastical year. They neither essayed to exhaust the whole of Theology in a vague attempt, as the tyro through inadvertence will often do, nor did they dwell exclusively on any one feature of a true system to the distortion of the whole; on the contrary, their diverse themes were exquisitely and compactly blended into one consistent body when the volume for the year was made complete. Of each one it might also be said that it was harmonious in itself. Few words were spent in preface, nor was the introduction general, rambling, far remote, without a hint of what was coming, and applicable to any theme. It is a mark of beauty in some statues that the head is small. His discourse advanced at once into the midst, no little vein of thought unduly bulged, the muscles swelled, the body of it was enlarged, and though the flush of beauty sometimes gleamed upon its face, it showed the vigorous frame, symmetrical throughout. Such workmanship is not the proceed of an hour; it is not the careless effort of the desultory mind; it aims beyond the immortality which some men covet, and is instinct with

spiritual life : its inspiration is from God. To declare his Word aright might tax an angel's power. It is of all things else, that work, which he who sets his hand to should perform with all his might.

But one essential quality of these sermons deserves to be strictly noted, and it is not as a mere chance hearer that I come to their analysis. Others no doubt have been prepared with even greater labour, or have equalled them in art, or excelled them entirely in style, beauty, and copiousness of illustration. These things so far from being incompatible with the word of truth, are greatly to be desired and sought for. Yet you may listen to one which will fulfil all rules of rhetoric, and even thrills you with its oratory ; —it shall be pure in language, correct in precept, and logical in deduction ; it shall leave a pleasant impress on the mind, but somehow or other it lacks a sacred cast, it is felt to be devoid of nutriment, and of that quality which goes by the peculiar name of unction.

Such was not the case with the Rector's sermons, which were not essays merely, and ice cold pieces of artistic art. Yet earnest as they were, and full of feeling, imbued with pious warmth, clothed in the appropriate drapery of

Holy Writ, they never still employed the petted words of cant, nor fell into a whining tone of empty exhortation. In subject and in matter, they were in the true sense, practical, addressed to spiritual beings, not to spirits, to men, not angels. They treated much of earthly relations, they expounded in a lucid way the topics of Christian morality. Many who would fain soar to the seventh heaven to which St. Paul was carried, who profess to breathe the rarified atmosphere of spiritual life, and love to dwell on metaphysical distinctions, may yet need to be instructed as to the scope of such virtues as common honesty. If these things be not a proper part of Christian teaching, then I verily believe that the Sermon on the Mount itself may be not considered evangelical, and that the Gospels are not proper reading for unconverted men. For one discourse such as Christ delivered to Nicodemus, there are a hundred from his sacred lips, which if now spoken, might be demurred to, because they were not harped upon a solitary string, and it may be well questioned whether those who fulfil the requisitions of the moral law with some degree of perfectness, are so much given to spiritual pride as those who refer their present state to the test of vague sensation. It

is true that the Gospel would be jejune enough if reduced to a mere moral system. It includes that, but sweeps immeasurably beyond it: its hopes, its richness, its fullness, its glory, are laid up in Christ alone. It is at the foot of the Cross alone that all earthly virtues are to be inculcated, and by Him, not them, that human souls can be redeemed. Now if there be in fact two classes of teachers among those who hold the same great truths, I do not place my friend in either, for he blent the excellencies of both. I thought his teaching showed somewhat of that harmony which belongs to a true system, that it did not lean too much to any dogma, that it set forth the "outward and spiritual sign," as well as the "inward and spiritual grace." It was not a soul without a body, nor a body without a soul, and was thus adapted to those who were composed of both. At all events it might suggest much which was worthy of imitation by young preachers of the present day.

Ancient and modern sermons differ not so much in respect of style, as of quality. The former, which have come down to us in their quaint dress, are matter-full, pithy, and concentrated—containing much and suggesting more. The latter in the comparison appear to be thin, diluted,

and to amass no learning. A cursory glance and no study puts the reader in possession of all their thoughts, which have been better expressed and in a shorter compass two hundred years ago. Yet if Taylor, or South, or Fuller, were to appear before the most refined, intellectual and Christian audience now-a-days, and to deliver the like discourses, they would be thought to utter something very strange and unsuitable to the occasion. They are not cast, indeed, in such a manner as to be adapted to the habits, or the ways of thinking, of every shifting age. They are for the eye of the diligent student, not for the ear of living men. What we want is all of their zeal and a tithe of their learning, the wisdom of yesterday, but the dress and habit of to-day. In addition to a well-directed zeal, an accomplished education and more labour is required for modern sermons to free them from their well-known dullness; the art of compressing much in a little. Long discourses are not adapted to do the most good, or to benefit the hearer, but the clergy complain that the demand is so repeated that they have not time to make them shorter. Thirty minutes is the limit, as a general thing, to which they ought to extend. It affords ample time to state a proposition, to pave the way, to expound,

to illustrate, and to apply. An hour of study to clip away one minute spent in redundance, is not labour lost.

I am by no means wishing to extol the Rector as a great preacher, or to lavish upon him an admiration which turns the heads of many whose ears should be dull to human praise. It is true that we have among us those who can still captivate and rivet the attention of large assemblies by their peculiar gifts, and sometimes bear them along on a torrent of eloquence, as copious and rushing as that of a Massillon or a Bourdalue. He was not one of them, but in the main a plain speaker, and if he excited admiration, it was of the Truth itself, not of its frail and humble minister. Alas! that is too often withdrawn from the subject which is given to the man, and while the pulse beats faster, and the eyes are strained, and even the falling pin is heard with its unwelcome sound, we bear away upon our hearts the image of the preacher, and the echoes of his sweet-toned voice. If ever eloquence may tower to its supremest height, it is on themes enough to lift the soul aloft until it bathes its plumes in splendours of the "rainbow round about the throne." Forth from the twinkling light of chaos it beholds the Sun of Righteousness rise up with

glad beams on the earth, while o'er the troubled waves the holy Dove comes fluttering to the ark of safety with the Olive Branch. But if there be a time when Intellect profanes itself, and golden Poets grovel in the dust, when gift of tongues appears like sounding brass, and flattery sinks beneath contempt, it is when one stands forth with honeyed words, and merely human artifice, to show himself, and not the Crucified—to make the sacred desk a stage for petty vanity, and for unhallowed personal display.

But I must discard didactics, having intended to say a few words about sermons, not to write one. I shall add a word or two about the Church service.

The Rector read it in such a manner as to make the people feel it. For as to those common prayers which have been bequeathed to the Church through so many generations, and which have trembled on the lips of so many martyrs and holy men,—free as they are from any vestiges of incorrect taste or impropriety of expression, and including all things which for the most part it is proper to pray for,—rising as they often do to the most exalted pitch of fervour, and acknowledged for their intrinsic beauty to stand "in the very first rank of uninspired composi-

tions," it is owing to no fault of their own if they do not touch the heart, and answer all the ends of public worship. Yet it is not too much to say that they are seldom read well, that their effect is marred, that they become indeed, as is alleged, a form only. It is strange that many who are well instructed in theology, and whose libraries are filled with the golden stores of other men's learning, either hold it beneath their position, or find it above their ability, to learn to read correctly. Their emphasis is misplaced, all rhythm and cadence are set at defiance, they hurry on with too much rapidity, they drawl lamentably, they pay no regard to punctuation or grammar, their confirmed mannerism offends the ear and distracts the attention, they are governed by no rules, or what is worse still, they go through the liturgic service after a cold, correct, and merely artistic method. The same strictures, as well as others which might be mentioned, apply to the reading of the Scriptures, and the delivery of *extempore* prayers. Because these things are subordinate, it is presumed that no one will consider them of no importance.

Herbert was the auspicious name of the gentle Rector of St. John the Evangelist's. He had caught in some degree the spirit of his namesake

who wrote the "Country Parson," and it would task the genial heart and mellow diction of another Walton to describe the portion of a life which scarcely yet approached its prime. Upon the threshold of an acquaintance you felt already as one who stands beneath a blossom-covered porch, and longs to see the portals opened, and to gain admittance to the pleasant chambers which are within. His open, candid look, his beaming eyes and cheerful countenance, comblended with a dignity which never stepped beyond the proper bounds; the earnest way in which he talked on common things like common men,—a sympathy and human feeling with the outer world, all stood in well marked contrast with the fixed, and stiff, and starched, and formal cast of countenance impressed with dogma, and cast within the settled mould of theologic system. An atro-bilious, melancholy look is by no means the best means to denote that "wisdom's ways are ways of pleasantness." His countenance was always happy, which was a pretty sure index that his theology was right, and that while he thought upon the justice, he had not clean put the mercy and goodness of God from before his eyes. That a parson should be a bugbear is sometimes due to a formal and forbidding air, to

a cold and averted glance which he gives at the wicked world, instead of looking it plump in the face—to a formality more decided than can be conveyed by the cut of the garments, or what is more unpleasant still, to a sleek smoothness of the visage, as if anointed with the emollient oil of sanctity from the Pharisee's own cruet. In many cases prepossession is unfounded, and when the chill has subsided, and the first horror is done away, the clergy as a class will be found to be, what their education, predilections, and noble calling ought to make them, the most agreeable and companionable people in the world. It does not follow that if a stiff-necked man who wears a white cravat looks solemn, he must be a hypocrite; that the children must run away when he puts his hand to the knocker, that the novel must be thrust into the folds of a religious newspaper, and the vestiges of the card table swept into a drawer, and that he must be welcomed with a prepared and steady look, as if he came to talk expressly about the affairs of the soul! He will do so by his unblemished conduct upon a Monday morning, as much as by his direct and earnest preaching on the Sunday. A little reflection will show that other causes than that of rigorous dogma may sometimes cast his face into the

mould of melancholy—that not peculiar Faith, but a peculiar want of it, may make him over anxious about the temporal wants of to-day—that he has divers troubles, and does not find the cup of poverty to be sweet. Sometimes his debts hang over his head, and they are of such a kind that he can only wish that they were paid, but can hardly pray that they may be forgiven ; or his feelings have been hurt, his relations have been disturbed, and the Williwillows threaten to leave the parish. Sometimes, but not always, the creed lengthens the face of a man.

I have spoken of Mr. Herbert's preaching, but it was not confined to the pulpit, for whenever he met you, it was like a homily without dullness. Joy finds a more universal sympathy than sorrow, and religion is exhibited in a certain hue, which imbues the life, as much as in the formal act. It is in the glance of the eye, and it is in the grasp of the hand, and it is in every thing through which the spirit of charity can diffuse itself. Cant is disgusting to all people of true feeling and education, whether it be laic or cleric. Away with it. It is another thing to be distinguished for too much levity, a d for a never-ceasing prattle about things of no value. I was delighted to witness the cordiality which distinguished

the intercourse of my friend with all classes, and the ready manner with which they co-operated with him in every good work.

As he was not behind in the virtue of hospitality, he was himself thrice welcome wherever he went. I had seen him under every aspect—among the homes of the poor and in the houses of the wealthy; in festive halls, by the side of the sick, and in the chamber of the dying—and I can say that he well merited an affection which had not yet been turned aside by misapprehension, nor become cold through familiarity, and which was better far than the temporary popularity which is sometimes accorded to brilliant talents and to specious gifts throughout a short-lived, golden day. But if he was a proper man in all respects, his position was desirable, for his might be called a Model Parish.

The Church of St. John's the Evangelist, and the parsonage, (the latter had a glebe attached,) were not originally built in order to bring the adjoining property into market. They were in a choice location—the best which could be found. Country churches ought if possible to be built in more inviting places than country-seats, yet the latter too often pre-occupy every pleasant knoll and shady nook which the hand of culture

may embellish. Where God has made a pleasant landscape, with all its hills, and woods, and meads, and running waters, it is not right to erect his temple in a neighbouring desert where there is no shade. We wish to see the ivy flourish round its porch and tower, the trees throw out their sheltering limbs, and to have the incense of the blooming spring come up around its altars. These things are not essential to true worship, but are in accordance with it. They arise out of principles which can neither be gainsayed nor denied. They belong to the inherent propriety of things. Besides, wherever a church is built, there is usually the place where the dead repose, "God's Acre," as it was once called. Let all pleasant associations gather around it, for though the dews which are to fall upon its sod be bitter, they shall sparkle more brightly than tears which are wept from the eyes of the morning. I for one would rather mingle with the churchyard world, where the plain green-sward waves, and the old trees fling their shadows, than be conveyed at last to some renowned cemetery, some city of the dead, where showy sculpture stands to be admired, and flimsy sentiment prevails. Give us no epitaph, or wreaths of artificial flowers, only the few chance violets of the

spring—a resting place within one's native village, where the same enclosures which surround the consecrated church protect the dead from desecration.

The church was a plain structure, in architecture neither Roman nor Gothic, but its proportions were good. Jones of Nayland, in one of his ingenious essays, has remarked that there are certain mathematical relations of length, breadth and height, which he represents by certain numbers, which exactly please the eye, and are productive of true harmony. An approximation to these by a rough guess-work, is all which has been aimed at in many of our country churches built some time ago ; but in minor details, the architects or carpenters do not attempt to approach any standard whatever, but have thrown themselves entirely on their native genius. Their steeples are compositions, but of so grotesque a kind as would only be the offspring of nightmare in the brain of Sir Christopher or of Michael Angelo. Some indeed are so ludicrous as to afford a perpetual fund of amusement to the Upjohns, Wills and Lefevres of the present day, in their rural rides. Many of them in course of time, by the pressure of the wind or tempests, become like the leaning tower of Pisa,

only the centre of gravity, as in the case of that durable structure, does not accurately fall within the base. Either they pull so hard on the timbers of the main buiding, or look so very threatening, that like the steeple of Father Boyle's church, they must be pulled down to quiet apprehension. You will see a crowd of men in the street of a village, tugging away at ropes, and presently with a mighty crash, heard to the utmost limits of the parish, down comes the church steeple, and an unsightly cupola is put in its place.

St. John's was built of solid and substantial stone, and told no lies within its temple nave in paint or plaster. There was no graining of pretended, heartless oak—there were no veins of imitated marble, thin devices to deceive the eye. That which seemed to be, was, and the whole building, however plain, because it presented nothing false, was a symbol of Divine truth. In this respect, at least, it was church-like, though it had no painted glass, and its common details of doors, windows, walls, pulpit, desk, and chancel, (admitting it to be newly-built) would scarcely give the ecclesiologist a chance to display his learning. He could barely say of it that it was so long and so broad, and that it could accom-

modate so many. He would no more think of describing it in technical phrase, than a musical critic would a common melody well executed by an ordinary player. There would be a lamentable want of tracery, mullions and corbels, to inflate his account withal. Nevertheless it violated no principles of correct taste, and therefore as an example exercised a better moral influence than costly buildings which aim at more than they can accomplish, and seek to produce great effects from small causes. Wo be to him who would represent a superb portico by a wooden piazza, a great dome by a small sky-light, or any thing superlatively great by that which is ridiculously little. A cathedral in pastry, soap, or sugar, is as pompous and effective as one composed of mud or shingles. Nothing is great which will not endure a long time, and nothing can represent the great which is not composed of substantial materials. Something at least as hard as stone must remind us of durability, and something at least an ell long of eternity. Well says Jeremy Bartold, in one of those proverbial sayings found in his doings—"Little wrens be content with small nests !—Every Michael cannot fashion y^e^ abode of an Archangel."

Together with the glebe, the church, the parsonage, the library, all of which had appertained to St. John's from its earliest foundation, at which time "ye Venerable Society for ye Propagation of ye Gospell" was employed in these parts, the blessings of quiet and harmony had been handed down from generation to generation. The corporation bequeathed it. Hereditary good manners, the fruit of good will, had always distinguished the relations of the clergy and the people. The right feeling which ought to exist had rarely been disturbed. The example of the first missionary seemed visibly imprinted on the characters of those who came after him. It was a memorial whose purity remained unsullied, uneffaced in the air of heaven where he had first reared it. It pointed to the skies.

After much pleasant converse with the Rector in his library, I proceeded on my journey to pay a visit to the Rector of "St. John's in the Wilderness," and after a patient hearing of his ills and distresses, of the insufficiency of his support, and his misunderstandings with the people, I turned upon my heel, and with a glance of pity cast at his dilapidated church and its cheerless neighbourhood, I directed him to take counsel of the worthy Herbert, his neighbour, with whom

all things went smoothly, because he was qualified for his position by his piety and judgment,—and by following in the steps of his predecessors had done much toward making his own in all respects a MODEL PARISH.

THE SEVEN SLEEPERS.

A Tale.

"I saw then in my dream that he went on thus, even until he came at the bottom, when he saw a little out of the way some men fast asleep with fetters upon their heels. The name of the one was SIMPLE, another SLOTH, and a third PRESUMPTION. CHRISTIAN then seeing them lie in this case went to them, if peradventure he might awake them, and cried, You are like them that sleep on the top of a mast, for the dead sea is under you, a gulf that hath no bottom. Awake, therefore, and come away; be willing also, and I will help you off with your irons."

BUNYAN'S PILGRIM'S PROGRESS.

MANY years ago, but not beyond the recollection of some who are now living, in a pleasant rural neighbourhood called Jacob's Well, resided a well-known clergyman by the name of Pettibones. He was, at the time of this narrative, in the fiftieth year of his age, and in the twenty-fifth of his ministry—an easy, good soul, but as the phrase was, a lamentably dull

preacher. On more than one occasion his friends had made up their minds to remonstrate with him in a kind way, and to advise a little more study. For there were those who liked to have their ears tickled at that time as well as now, or at least to have the truth enforced in such a manner as to arrest the attention of the hearers. They thought it necessary that he should be dealt with plainly, for he was exceedingly complacent in the matter of his sermons, and had preached over his favorite ones, of which he had many, a great number of times—so that there was a whisper and a smile the moment that he had given out the text. If his cheeks were uncommonly flushed, and his collar very stiffly starched—"Now for it," the more mischievous would exclaim—"Belshazzar's Feast!"—And Belshazzar's feast it was.

Now it happened that those who were deputed to perform the task of waiting upon him with reference to the above subject, never had the heart or courage to do it. They had several times presented themselves in his study for the express purpose, but he was so free from any suspicion, and they were so much afraid of wounding his feelings, that they knew not how to begin. He was fluent in conversation, and soon engaged them on various topics, to illustrate which he

would rise from his seat, and after a little searching draw forth sundry sermons, passages of which, if they had no objection, he would read to them. No objection being made, he would edify them in this way for a half an hour, until the committee were too happy to sound a retreat. They never made the attempt a second time.

Father Pettibones thus remained in ignorance of the disaffection, and kept on preaching as usual. He had been heard to remark, that to him the greatest luxury in the world was the delivery of sermons, and the hours which he spent in the pulpit were the happiest of his life. "My dear," he would say to his wife, "to-day I think I will preach my discourse on Lazarus, with which poor Mrs. Peters, now in heaven, told me that she was so much pleased. The old lady often alluded to it, and expressed the opinion that it ought to do good. It seems to me that it might be repeated with profit."

"Certainly, my dear, it is one of your best. I should like to hear it again myself. I think there are many who will thank you for it."

"Well then, Lazarus, it shall be," and the good man put the discourse upon his desk.

While the people had thus meditated a descent upon him, he it appears had somewhat to allege

against certain members of his congregation, and was preparing to bring the matter before those whom it concerned, although perhaps they had never dreamed of it. It was the first time during twenty-five years that his equilibrium had been disturbed, or that he had found it necessary, as he thought, to exercise a little severity, and he was about to do it now, rather in sorrow than in anger. It was not that his opinions came in conflict with those of any one else, that there were those who did not like him, or that his popularity, such as it was, might be considered on the wane. Nor were there evil livers, or scandalous people among his flock, nor any of those troubles which often make the clergyman's thermometer to rise. That which stirred him up might be even deemed a small matter, and one of common occurrence in all churches. It resulted from the following curious facts, which form a part of his history, and which have been handed down to our times as a sort of legend.

Mr. Pettibones boasted that he had a very attentive congregation, but after a long time the fact slowly attracted his notice, that among the number were seven persons who always slept under his preaching. He discovered them by accident on a certain Sunday, as he glanced

around to get the recognition of the people's faces. At first he hoped that it was a mere accident in consequence of the church being overheated, or of a similar cause—but after that, he watched, and caught them again at it. He was told that it was an habitual thing. Scarcely had he entered upon his exordium when they began to indulge. Had they been all obscure people, they might have slumbered unobserved, but some of them were those whose position made their example the more unbecoming and dangerous. Mr. Pettibones was much piqued and annoyed. All that rich fund of instruction prepared expressly for them in his excellent discourses, he said to himself, was cast as pearls before swine. The more they took their ease, the more uneasy he became about them. In vain he puzzled his brain to know why the sound of his voice should be to their souls like the Lethe of forgetfulness. He was not conscious of any decay of powers, though slowly and gradually the white hairs were collecting on his brow. He frequently directed his voice toward them, and by various hints endeavored to arouse their attention. He took for his subject such texts as these :—"Awake, thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead," or "Behold the dreamer cometh," or "While the bride-

groom tarried they all slumbered and slept." On one occasion, he struck out boldly in a parenthesis :—"There are those who sleep under the sound of the Gospel, and among them the very ones that ought to be awake." Some laughed, and others smiled at this, but on the drowsy set it had no effect at all. Tombstones might have been placed at the heads of their pews, for they showed no symptoms of life—with the exception of one who snored until the sun moved round into his face, when he woke up with a sneeze, sometimes repeated several times, and exciting great merriment among the children. What was to be done? Mr. Pettibones found out that these delinquents had been guilty of this habit every Sunday for many years, and he thought he must have been asleep himself not to have been aware of the fact before. Now that he had opened his eyes to it, he meditated seriously how he should take it in hand. What embarrassed him much, was, that when he met the sleepers in the intercourse of the world, they were peculiarly friendly and wide awake. They were distributed among the various ranks of society in the following order. The first was a wealthy gentleman, who lived sumptuously ; the second was a poor labourer or small farmer, one who meant to do

well, who always occupied his seat in church, although he slept in it; the third, a snappish, testy old man, who did not like to be contradicted; the fourth, an old lady abundant in good works, but who became fatigued after them; the fifth, a corpulent fellow who weighed two hundred pounds; and the last, a learned professor in a college. The professor by his conduct annoyed the good parson more than all the others, and it was to him especially that he alluded when he said that some slept who ought of all others to be found awake.

"Well," said Mr. Pettibones, "it is unpleasant business, but the path of duty is plain. I will go and remonstrate individually with these people—I will upbraid them with their sloth—I will at any rate appeal to their kindly sensibilities, and see what effect it will have."

One morning after breakfast when he was clean shaved, he buttoned up his coat, took his cane in his hand, and started briskly on this errand. Arrived at the gate of his wealthy parishioner, he collected his thoughts and arranged his discourse a little in his mind. A certain awe impressed him as he looked at the colonnade of the mansion. "I do not feel well to-day," he said to

himself, "and require exercise. I believe I will go first and rebuke the farmer who lives several miles off, and call here on my return. I shall thus kill two birds with one stone. I shall reprove him for the sin of drowsiness, and have the benefit of a long walk." With this he turned away, and walked with a speedy step, boiling over with animosity toward Jones the farmer. At least once in every hundred yards the reprimand which he was about to give passed through his mind. He shook his head, and repeated it as he opened a gate or leaped over a fence. He brandished his cane and knocked off the heads of weeds or flowers, he was seen gesticulating by the way, and in fact he never felt so bold as he did in his mission to Jones the farmer. "The ungrateful wretch!" said he, "to reap the fruits of the earth, and to sleep like a sluggard under the invitations of the Gospel! To say the least of it, it shows the want of good manners, that could scarcely be expected, and it is a downright insult to the minister of God." His feelings were much excited until he saw the poor man at work in his field. All of a sudden a reluctance came over him, and the voice of Conscience whispered in his ear—"Why do you not go first to the na

bob? Do you neglect the greater for the less? Instruct him in the right, and you will strike at the root of the evil. But perhaps you are afraid to risk his displeasure." "True," replied the Rector, "Conscience is right. I can myself find an excuse for this poor man. He labours hard during six days of the week, and when the Sunday comes, he is overtaken by the enemy against his will. I will say nothing upon the subject at present." With that he walked up to farmer Jones, took him pleasantly by the hand, talked a few moments about crops and farming, went into his house, patted the children upon the head, partook of his hospitality, and then wished him a pleasant morning, as if he had only come to make a pastoral call. "This will prove a better discourse," thought he, "than my one entitled 'Awake, thou that sleepest.' Nevertheless I am not afraid of Mr. Evelyn. I will return to his house and speak my mind candidly." With that he hurried back and had just arrived at the gate of the rich man, when he met a servant who put into his hands a complimentary letter containing a five pound note. He deposited the same in his pocket, and retraced his steps. "After all," said he, "this man is a true Christian.

We cannot look for perfection on the earth. God forbid that I should rebuff kindness with reproof. It would be most unseemly. He who is so wide awake to the wants of a minister of the Gospel has not been unaffected by his preaching, and can probably hear, and no doubt does, with his eyes shut. I will see Mr. Evelyn again on this matter."

He now went to visit the peevish hypochondriac, and feeling bold and re-assured from the possession of the five pound note, he attacked him as he stood in his flowered morning gown. He might as well have applied a spark to a magazine of gunpowder. The old catechumen was a little deaf, and as Mr. Pettibones approached his point very indirectly, and in an incoherent manner, it was several minutes before the other comprehended clearly the object of his visit. In the mean time, to Mr. Pettibones' repeated expressions "I beg pardon—I hope, Sir—I—I trust, Sir," he applied the hollow of his hand to his ear, knitted his brows, and thrust his head forward with a sharp interrogative "eh?"

"I was remarking just now," said the parson, with a little more boldness, at the same time feeling in his waistcoat pocket, and pinching the

five pound note,—" that I hope you will take it in a friendly way—"

" Eh ? eh ? Friendly—how's that ? To be sure !—to be sure !"

" My dear Sir, I am delighted to hear it. I have always numbered you among my personal friends—"

" Well, well, quick, quick, to be sure, to be sure !"

" When I therefore take the liberty to come to you for a specific purpose—"

" Want money, I suppose. I haven't a cent, Sir—not a cent. No end of appeals of this kind. Gave five dollars the other day for church missions, don't believe the heathen will ever see one cent of it. It won't do them any good—not at all, Sir, not at all, so much money thrown into the sea. I am tired and sick of such demands. I've got nothing. I tell you I'm as poor as a church mouse—I'm as poor as a church mouse." Mr. Snapjohn repeated everything which he said two or three times, and walked about with his hands behind his back, or else putting snuff into his nose from a gold snuff-box in large quantities.

The good man was a little frightened, nevertheless he plucked up courage and determined to

speak his mind. So he elevated his voice till he could be heard in the cellar or in the garret.

"I'm not deaf, Sir, I'm not deaf!" exclaimed the cross gentleman.

"I beg pardon," said Mr. Pettibones in a low voice, so that he could not be heard at all—"I thought you were a little."

"Eh? eh?—I have told you I won't give you any thing."

"I am not in want of money," said the other, speaking in a clear voice again, and with distinct emphasis.

"I am glad of it—all the better. I never see any one cross the threshold now-a-days without thinking that he is after money. The world was never infested with such a pack of beggars and mendicants."

"I observe," said the clergyman, "that you sleep every Sunday under the preaching of the Gospel."

"What, Sir?"

"It gives me great pain to appeal to you on a subject which does not concern the heathen, but your own immortal interests, not of money, but of that which is infinitely more valuable; and if I do it plainly you will attribute it to the proper motives When the word of Life is proclaimed

to you, Mr. Snapjohn, I observe that you sleep profoundly"—and the parson elevated his voice again, and enunciated his words distinctly—"you make a regular habit of going to sleep, and I have come to tell you of it."

Mr. Snapjohn put his hands behind his back, walked violently up and down the room several times on the balls of his heels, so that the whole house was jarred, and the windows rattled ; then stopping at the distance of several yards from the unfortunate parson, clenched his fist and poured forth a torrent of the most abusive invective.

"Sleep !" said he, "what's that to you, Sir ? Who's the cause of it ? Do you come here to lecture me, to priest-ride me ? Go and talk to old women. You are an impertinent old drone." Mr. Snapjohn paused a moment, then shaking his fist and stamping his foot violently on the floor in a tremendous rage—"leave my house !" he exclaimed, "this instant ! do you hear, Sir ?"

"I beg pardon, I did not mean to offend you," interceded Mr. Pettibones, meekly.

"Not a word, Sir ; leave my house, Sir."

The pastor was frightened, and fearing violence, went out of the house much faster than he went in, and had it not been for the presence of the five pound note he should have felt exceed-

ingly crest-fallen. "Really," said he, "he is a peculiar man, and must be approached in a peculiar way. This is the most injudicious thing that I have done for the last twenty-five years, and may redound to my injury. I have always heard that he was eccentric, and wrathy to a high degree when opposed, and should have been contented that he came to church at all, and was willing to pay his pew rent. What is the use of spending one's strength for nought? Alas! he is mortally offended, but I have striven to do my duty; the result I leave with God."

Notwithstanding his ill luck, he meant to go through the task which he had assigned to himself in the morning, although it was now past noon—and it was without any apprehension, but with a certainty of success, that he knocked at the door of old Mrs. Billincoo. He was asked into the parlour, and sent his name and compliments up to the excellent lady, stating that if she were unengaged, he would be glad to see her a few minutes.

The servant returned, saying that her mistress begged to be excused, as she was taking a morning's nap.

"Pshaw!" said Mr. P. as he went out of the

gate, "how many stumbling blocks the Devil throws in the way of a man's duty."

Next he went to the house of the fat man, determined to administer a lecture to his obesity: —"My dear friend," said the other as soon as he beheld him, his red cheeks glowing with jollity, and grasping the parson by the hand, "Ha! ha! ha!—walk in, sit down! it is a remedy for sore eyes to see you. You're always welcome. Why don't you come oftener? Come now, put down your hat and cane, and dine with us on some good roast beef and pudding. Mrs. B. will be in in a few minutes. Well, well, how are your good wife and Aunt Suzy, and all the little ones? You bear your age remarkably well, Mr. Pettibones. How hearty you look. Why, Sir, you have not changed since I have known you these fifteen years. Saving your presence, I have such a good thing to tell you. Ha! ha! ha! The other day—eh-he, he! he! Now tell me, did you receive a joint of meat on Thursday as a present?"

"I did," said the rector.

Mr. B. rubbed his hands, and burst into a fit of laughter. "Too good! too good!"

"Have you eaten it up?"

"Yes, we have."

"Ho! ho! ho!—he! he! he!—better yet." Here he was convulsed, and had a fit of choking, which lasted some minutes. "Let me tell you the whole story. Mr. Thompson, your neighbour, went to market, and bought that joint of meat for his own dinner. He sent a coloured man with it to his house, but when he returned at noon, lo and behold, no meat! The messenger had made a mistake. Reverend, may you always have as good luck, and may such mistakes occur often. Ho! ho! ho! eh, ho! ho! ho!"

The jolly fat man here rang the bell, and ordered some wine and wine-glasses. The parson partook, and what with the light conversation and anecdotes which ensued, he found no opportunity to speak upon the subject of his errand; in fact, it was entirely driven out of his head. "What a kind hearted man!" said he, as he went away. "What a pity it is that he does not know what is for his soul's interest. He provides only for the wants of the body, I must try him again, and find out some way to keep him awake in sermon time. He is incapable of being affronted."

Mr. Pettibones now paid his respects to the Professor, who was also inclined to be humour-

ous, and to relax himself a little after severe study. He placed his spectacles on the top of his head and wiped his eyes.

"Learned Professor," said the parson, coming to the point at once, "I happened to look at you last Sunday, in church, when to my surprise, I found that you were sleeping soundly."

"Ah?" said he, laughing, "very likely. Homer sometimes nods. I sit up late at night, and smoke a great deal of tobacco, too much, I am afraid, my friend, yet it is not very courteous, I admit, to be inattentive to your excellent sermons." With that he dismissed the matter with great levity. The Rector did not recur to it again, and indeed, the experience of the morning suggested that it would not be well to give the conversation an unpleasant turn, so he talked half an hour about books and literature, and took his leave. The words "excellent sermon," came back in pleasant recollection. "The Professor," said he, to himself, "has sharper ears than I gave him credit for." During the rest of the walk his mind was employed in expedients to mitigate the anger of his testy parishioner, who after all his talk about beggars, was not disposed to be illiberal in money matters, but paid his proportion when appealed to at the proper time.

"Well," said the parson's wife, as he threw off his coat, and hung his hat on a peg. "You have been absent a long time. What has been the result of your day's work?"

"Five pounds," replied he.

"Excellent," replied she. "I am in want of parlour curtains. And did you succeed in rousing up the seven sleepers?"

"Alas, my dear, the time was not propitious. I have postponed it to a better opportunity."

"Then they will sleep on till the day of doom. You want courage, Mr. Pettibones. Procrastination is your ruin, and has been since you have lived at Jacob's Well."

"Not at all. I have conversed seriously with Mr. Snapjohn, and he blackguarded me like a pickpocket. I don't think that we shall see his face again at St. James's."

"I am afraid you have been indiscreet," said his wife. "Have you conversed with Mrs. Billincoo with reference to her sleeping?"

"She was asleep, and declined to be disturbed at the time of my visit."

Just then the dinner bell rang, and the parson, after having eaten heartily, threw himself down upon a sofa, and being much exhausted by his efforts, drew a red silk handkerchief over his

eyes, and slumbered and snoozed for an hour like one of the seven sleepers.

For many days after the events just recorded, the mind of the preacher was diverted from its object by a new source of trouble, and was employed in the consideration of many ingenious devices to reclaim Mr. Snapjohn. The secluded and unoffending life of that gentleman for many years, so long as he was not opposed, and permitted to mind his own business, occurred to the Rector, and caused him greatly to lament his injudicious movement. Few understood the mental constitution of Snapjohn, which was not to be handled by the common Professor of Human Nature, much less by the obtrusive bungler, lest he should destroy the balance, hurt the delicate springs of action, or set it into violent motion, and make it run down of a sudden with a fearful whizz. He was like a clock, only comprehended by the clock-maker who made him, with many independent pieces of mechanism. If he were a-going, in all conscience leave him alone; but if he stopped, let the ignoramus keep his hands aloof, and not attempt to make him move by shaking him. Otherwise a smash would be the result.

Mr. Pettibones thought he would go again to

his house, and ask his pardon for anything which he might have said offensive to his feelings, or try to effect a reconciliation through others. We think however that this one fact will appear in that most unpleasant event which can occur in ordinary life, the disturbance of friendly and personal relations. They who give offence without intending it by sheer bungling, will be apt to botch the rent and make it worse by farther handling, and by no means to repair the damage. By this it is not to be inferred that no attempt must be made in the most Christian profession of a peace-maker, or that apology should not be offered in all cases where it is justly due. I speak only of trivial and petty matters, which arise from a mutual misunderstanding of the parties. Observe only a straight-forward and kindly bearing as usual, but let them alone for the present, and the gradual process of recuperative nature will heal up the wound, and prove that the injury was slight, and only accidental.

Mr. Pettibones was, however, ignorant of the world ; he inwardly groaned at the unpleasantness of his position, and in less than a week, becoming impatient of suspense, he found himself cheek by jowl with Mr. Snapjohn. The result was, that he fairly trembled in his shoes at the

violence of the rencontre. No time had been allowed for his adversary to be assuaged, he came upon him when sorely vexed by a delinquent tenant, in the worst fit of his dyspepsia, and half salivated by the effect of some undigested blue pills. He who is out of temper with all things, is glad to have a definite object presented to vent his wrath upon, for where you want to beat a dog it is easy to find a stick. Mr. Pettibones presented himself just in time to get the benefit of an ebullition of temper. Snapjohn charged upon him the moment that he saw him, and assaulted him with such epithets that he himself forgot his meekness, and retired from his presence in a towering passion.

"I will excommunicate him," said Mr. Pettibones, grasping his cane; "he is a heathen and a reprobate."

He was nearly attacked with a fit of the jaundice from the disturbance of his bile, he could not do justice to his meals, his sleep was disquieted by unpleasant dreams, he hunted among his books for some formula of a bull or anathema—and it was not without serious remonstrance on the part of his better judgment that he relinquished his determination to excommunicate Mr. Snapjohn. As to the latter, he was deep-rooted

in his animosity, roared like a wild bull at the least allusion to his adversary, and was never seen to enter the church doors again.

Mr. Pettibones at first thought that he should never recover from so great an outrage to his feelings, but time mollified the wound by its healing parmaceti, he no longer missed his contumacious parishioner in his pew or regretted his absence, and the whole quarrel became buried in the oblivion of by-gone affairs.

I must also mention that he had taken occasion to follow up the old lady, and that she also was much offended, and repulsed him with dignity. She was sitting in a high-backed chair, as straight as an arrow, her neck girdled in a well-crimped cambric collar, and she thought that he came to talk with her about the missionaries. But when he slowly and precariously ventured to charge her with sleeping over her prayer-book, the spirit of her sires rose in her veins, and her cheeks puffed out and became tinged with a lively carnation. Afterward, as she really held him in esteem, and her feelings swayed her powerfully, she absolutely wept aloud, to think that a person of seventy-five years should be reproved like a baby. The interview passed off, and she forgave him.

The giver of the five pound note kept awake for several Sundays, for those who do any thing in the line of charity are straightway stimulated to do more, and the best way to obtain complaisance of any one is to be the receiver of benefits. Mr. Pettibones however perceived that the work which he had set before him was yet to be accomplished, and he earnestly directed his attention to some method to rouse up his dead. At last, mistrusting his own judgment, and believing that in a multitude of counsellors there is safety, he resolved to consult his wardens and vestry, whom for the sake of the title (Mr. Snapjohn being now excluded from the number,) we will call the Seven Wise Men.

One morning after breakfast his horse with his saddle-bags was before the door, and he sent the boy to open the gate before him.

"Where are you going?" said his wife in alarm —is it to tread upon the toes of people, and stir up more disturbance in the parish?"

"I am going to take advice of the wardens and vestry."

"You had better let the sleepers alone," said she, "if you wish to rest well on your own pillows."

"I understand my own business," replied Pettibones, and he drove off.

He was gone all day. The first dignitary on whom he called was the very one who had complained most of the dulness of the preaching, but he had not the candour to speak his mind plainly to the one concerned, or perhaps he thought that it would be of no service.

"I have a mind," said Mr. P. with a serious air, "forthwith to resign my place as Rector of this parish."

"Pray why?" said the other with surprise.

"Because I cannot arrest the attention of all my hearers."

"It could hardly be expected," replied the church-warden.

"That is very true," said Mr. Pettibones, "and had not occurred to me before. There will always be those whose eyes are dull of seeing, and their ears of hearing Have you observed in me any decay of powers?"

"Not at all," answered the other, "you are as good a preacher as you ever were."

"I thank you," replied Pettibones. "If I am getting superannuated, I wish to make way for others. But what would you advise me to do in the matter?"

"Simply to speak a little louder," said the warden.

"Strange," replied he, "that I never reflected that some of these people might be deaf, as Snapjohn for example. I will take y our advice," and he made a note of it in his pocket book.

The second wise man on whom he called addressed him thus:—"Recollect that the congregation of St. James' is composed for the most part of plain people. Your taste leads you, does it not, into the abstruser metaphysics?" ("It does," interposed Pettibones.) "Perhaps you preach too much over the heads of your people. Make yourself level with their understandings." The speaker's eye twinkled a little, and the rector made a note also of that in his pocket book. "So far, so good," said he, and mounting his horse he passed on.

Next he came to one whose advice differed a little. "You are too general," said he. "Do not be afraid to speak the truth, preach *at* them."

"I have done so," exclaimed he, "and have gone even farther, without benefit."

"Try it again," rejoined the vestryman.

"I will do it," said he, slapping his knee. "One is not too old to learn something in divine

truth. I am acquiring information more valuable than gold."

The next person interrogated was a teacher of elocution and usher in an academy. "The most eloquent thoughts," said he, "you will be pleased to ob-se-erve, are unquestionably indebted to the adjuncts of art, and to the perfection of delivery. The department of sacred oratory is the most exalted in its aim, and unexampled in the theatre of its endeavours. It has to deal with the development of the sublimest ideas, and is conversant with mankind's everlasting welfare. A Demosthenes and an Isocrates had to treat of nothing more stabilitated than the politics of nations, but a *Mas-e-yong* and a Bourdalue carry you to the realms of the Heavenly. Where can you find so immense a field or so extensive a forum? In vain may a Paul preach and an Apollos water. Per-e-mit me to observe to you, Sir, that God works by means, which is totally overlooked by the majority of our preachers. The vocal powers must be trained to the highest point of which they may be susceptible. The utterance must be distinct, the vowel sounds and the consonants must receive the weight which is due to their distinctive elements, while a due regard must be paid to inflection, to cadence, and

to emphasis. You have thus in a word the components of a perfect orator, on whose words the audience will hang with a breathless attention, while the fall of a pin might be heard at his peroration."

Mr. Pettibones was so exceedingly impressed by the suggestions of this professor, that old as he was, he resolved to put himself at once under the instruction.

The fifth philosopher was no less willing to communicate his ideas when appealed to. "Mr. Pettibones," said he, "let me tell you that man is a social animal, and that an agreeable intercourse with your people will have more influence than the best written discourses from the pulpit. The offices of kindness and the sympathies of a Christian minister manifested to his flock, give effect to his words, and without these his preaching will be of no value. You must visit more—and then, to tell you the truth, you must go home and study more, by the which new lights and shadows will be made to fall on your subject, and men will be awakened. That is all which I can think of."

"It is good advice," said Mr. Pettibones; "I shall put it in practice."

He next reined up his horse at the door of a

man who gave it as his opinion that he ought not to set forth so much doctrinal matter. It was dry and tedious, and it was no wonder that some people could not listen to it.

"I doubt not," rejoined he, "that there may be some truth in this, but I am bound by virtue of my office not to give those things entirely the go-by. I will however reflect on what you say, and give it a place in my note book," and he forthwith drew out his pencil.

Last of all he appealed to an old man who appeared to have the aspect of a sage, though he was like a child in simplicity. "Ah," said he, smiling pleasantly, "all that you can say will have no effect of itself, if the Spirit of God does not go with it. Get upon your knees at home—and as our Saviour opened the eyes of the blind, you can at least pray that the eyes of your hearers may be opened."

"He did it by a miracle," rejoined Mr. Pettibones.

"Exactly," said the other, "and he can do it again by the like miracle."

"I see that he considers me deficient in faith," said the questioner, "and perhaps I am so. That is a subject which I shall inquire into when I have

leisure. It is a doctrine which I preach, and God forbid that I should be found wanting."

So much for the sayings of the seven wise men; and the good man having stored them away, went home feeling more enriched than by the possession of the five pound note—and having examined the suggestions and conned them over, he resolved to try what they were worth, and to benefit himself by the whole of them in the following order:—"to speak a little louder,"—"not to speak above the heads of the people,"—"to preach at them,"—"to improve his vocal powers,"—"to visit more,"—"to treat less of doctrinal matters,"—and above all "to pray that their eyes might be opened." With this he went to sleep upon his sofa, pulling his red handkerchief over his eyes, and thanking God that he had offended no one. Now it appeared to him that he could not put all these rules into practice at once, but that he would try them one at a time. He would apportion his experiments among seven Sundays, but on the eighth he would come down with a grand compound effort which should combine all. By the seven different attempts he hoped to reach some one of the sleepers, and by the final effort to arouse the whole set. The idea pleased him, and on the first Sunday after Trini-

ty, (for it was at that season of the ecclesiastical year) he accordingly began to "speak louder." His voice was harsh and strong already, but he absolutely roared, and his manner was so unusual as to make the congregation stare. As he advanced in his discourse he became excited by his own words, and his concluding appeal was literally in tones of thunder. When it was all over, and the congregation dispersed, one said to another, "What is coming to pass?"—but a stranger who happened to be present remarked, "You have a Boanerges in your pulpit."

Mr. Pettibones on the whole was gratified by the result, although at the close of the day he was exceedingly exhausted.

"Did you not perceive," he said to his wife, "the strict and solemn attention? Verily I have seen nothing like it since I came into this parish. The young and the old listened. May the words which they have heard with their outward ears be inwardly engrafted in their hearts,"—and he was quite complacent.

"The second head," said he, looking over his pocket book on the second Sunday after Trinity, "or rather the second requisition which I am to observe, and I shall do so implicitly, is to keep down the pride of my own intellect, which I am

free to confess is apt to carry me far out of the reach of ordinary minds, and to adapt myself to the common apprehension." Hereupon he burrowed among his yellow manuscripts, and selected a discourse which he had preached in his younger years to the children of a coloured Sunday school, and which he considered the plainest he had ever written. There was not a thought in it which would tax the common apprehension. He was so conscious of its great demerit, that he was afraid to look around to see what sensation it produced, he had not the courage to raise his voice as he did before, and it did not come back to re-assure him, and he could not tell whether he had succeeded or not. He therefore asked his wife when he returned home what she thought of it.

"My dear," said she, "I have never heard you preach so miserable a discourse before. It was entirely deficient in the energy which you exhibited a week ago. Why was it?"

"Because," replied he, "my faith failed me. I never in my life proclaimed the truth more simply or more plainly, but I forgot that by the foolishness of preaching men are to be converted. I will deliver it over again in connection with the first rule, to speak louder."

"I beg that you will not do it; it was not worthy of you."

"Now," said Mr. Pettibones, when the third experiment was about to be tried, "I am going to do, what I have not found it necessary to do, owing to the abundance of my stores, for a long time, and that is to write a new sermon. I shall not preach over the heads of my people, as I have been wont, nor below them, as I may possibly have erred in that direction last Sunday—I am going to preach *at them*." So saying he turned up his wristbands, mended his pens, poured out some fresh ink, put down his paper square before him, took his text and began. "Because thou art lukewarm and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth." He wrote all Friday, and all Saturday until twelve o'clock at night, when he snapped his pen and went to bed He was conscious of a mistake in having attempted to reprove people in their own houses, but in the church he supposed that by virtue of his office he had a right to do so, and they would hear him. But what a sermon did he fulminate! He cut up the rich for not casting more into the treasury, he addressed himself to the worldly-minded, to the 'lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God,' to the 'gray-headed old sinners;'

he made a hit in short at all classes of society—and looking severally at the different sleepers, and pointing with his finger, leaving in the rear-ground all the vague hints by which he had hitherto appealed to them, he said distinctly—"and you—and you—and you—" only omitting to call them by name. The sensation was prodigious. He went home and considered his triumph complete. There was a great deal of jocose remark among the parishioners, one rallying the other, and asking whether the lesson came home. People were surprised rather than offended, and said among themselves, "our Dominie is waking up."

On the day following Mr. Pettibones sent for Mr. Voccles, the teacher of elocution. The man of words left his classes in oratory, his pupils in the First Class Reader, and in the Second Class Reader, at the "Institute," and forthwith presented himself at the Parsonage, delighted that his services were appreciated in such high quarters.

"Well," said Mr. Pettibones, "I have resolved to put myself under your tuition."

"Unquestionably, you will never live to behold the day when you will repent of the determination," replied Voccles. "I know—I see—I can positively so far testify to its value in the

church, that the neglect of it—I will not proceed to declare that which I intended—yes, I *will* venture to do so in your presence—that the neglect of it has very much the appearance to my mind of a wilful, professional suicide. *Ob*-serve! There may be shallow, unphilosophical systems of vocal nurture, skimming lightly the mere surface of the subject, without any reference to those deep fundamental principles which are essential to elucidate the sense of an author. I do not doubt that there may be empirics in every art. But that does not invalidate the strength of my position. I appeal to you, Sir."

"Why no," says Pettibones, "I should think not."

"Very well," proceeded Voccles, "then we start from this point, that the great aim and end of rhetorical declamation is to elicit and to impress upon others the thoughts which are in the mind of the speaker, to arouse the attention of the apathetic, and to open their eyes to the value of divine and immutable truth."

"Ay, ay," rejoined the pupil, "if you can facilitate—"

"I ask your pardon, hear me out, Sir. The steps and stages which conduct to the recluser and more intricate parts of the subject are so de-

veloped in my plan of vocal education, that their completeness will only be manifest in the progressive advancement of the series of instructions, and an insight commensurate with their importance be attained to when fully completed. In the mean time a valuable assistance will be derived by my work on Primordial Elements, which you will do me the favour to peruse, Sir."

"Thank you," said Mr. Pettibones, "I am in a hurry. Please begin with your instructions."

"With the utmost satisfaction. If you have a prayer-book convenient——"

"Here it is," said the pupil, offering it to the Professor.

"Retain it in your own hands, if you please. Now Sir, if you will do me the kindness to read in my hearing the words which you will find on the opening page."

PETTIBONES.—"The Lord is in his holy Temple, let all the earth keep silence before him.

"From the rising of the sun——"

"Stop! stop!" exclaimed the teacher with great vehemence. "Read that over again." The scholar did so.

Mr. Voccles shook his head at the close. "I will venture to say," said he, "that the inspired

writer would not have known his own words as you then read them."

"What! Habbakuk! You are greatly mistaken."

"One moment, if you please. You will note particularly that the passage in this place is intended to impress the mind with awe by announcing the presence of Deity. An utter silence is to be imposed—all the elements are to be hushed—the unruly passions of men for a moment stayed. How are you going to do it? Not surely by consecutively arousing the echoes. 'THE LORD!'—What you want is to bring the minds which are inattentive to the cognisance of this one fact, to exclude the world and things of that nature by the peculiarity of that one word, and to startle and subdue them into solemnity. THE LORD!—hark! hush!—the echo has died away, a pause succeeds, ominous as the air of eternity, every movement ceases, the heart scarcely beats, the temple nave is full of the silent Presence—'IS IN HIS HOLY TEMPLE,' &c.—the effect is sublime."

"Oh, pshaw!" said Mr. Pettibones, "I don't see it. I do not think that the way in which I read it can be improved."

"Reverend and dear Sir," said the teacher,

rising with much dignity, "did I understand you to say that you desired to receive the benefit of my instructions in the elocutional art? I presumed that you had taken the pains to inquire about my credentials before having invited me to that end. But you will readily per-a-ceive, Sir, that there is no use for me to begin, if you dispute my method. I therefore ask permission to retire."

"By no means," said Pettibones; "sit down, I beg of you. Far be it from me to wound your feelings. But you are a little mistaken as to the nature of my necessities. It is not to be informed of the meaning of Holy Writ, which I have made my peculiar study during a large portion of my life. I desire nothing more than the culture of the vocal organs, for I have been desired to speak louder, and I would save my throat from unnecessary exertion, lest my usefulness be destroyed by an attack of bronchitis."

"Your *venerable age* will cause me to accede to your wishes. I advise you then to begin by practising upon the vowel sounds, which are the very first utterances of human nature. You will acquire the faculty of prolonging them to an indefinite extent, and of ejecting them with an explosive quality. You will go into some retired

place, for these exercises are not to be appreciated by the common beholder, and train your organs to do justice to the vowels. A, E, I, O, U, —I wish you to produce these sounds not from the mouth alone, but from the lower part of the chest, and if possible from the pit of the stomach. It is a long distance to fetch them up, I admit, and your venerable age may have marred the flexibility of your organs."

"Dear me! why, how old do you take me to be, Professor Voccles?" said Pettibones, quite piqued.

"By no means too aged, Sir, to imbibe elocutionary principles. It was very distant from my intention to convey such an idea. However, per-a-mit me to observe that it would be judicious to begin these exercises now, in your prime, and you will be astonished at the facilities which will be afforded to you in the pulpit."

"I hope so, indeed," said Mr. Pettibones.

"You will enunciate these vocal elements in this wise. Taking a long breath to inflate the lungs, (for that porous portion of the human system is very similar to a sponge), you will then eject the voice, keeping at the same time the mouth wide open, ah—thus :—(by parenthesis, allow me to state that you will suppose that part of the animal

economy, called the chest, to be a bellows), ah—thus, then, supposing yourself to winnow in a preliminary way, precisely as the young foal does: —Ah-humph-ah — humpha—A-A-eh! A-A-eh! — again, E-ah!—E-ah!—I-eh-eh—O-O-O-ah!—O-ah—U. In this way the throat is opened, and the way prepared."

"I am very much pleased with these suggestions," said Mr. Pettibones, "because the effort is only mechanical, nor do I doubt that by failing rightly to control my voice, I have spent much valuable breath for nought. The spiritual is in a great measure dependent on the physical, nor is the latter to be despised."

Mr. Voccles went away, promising to return weekly, and superintend the progress of the student. Scarcely was his back turned, when the latter immediately descended into the coal-cellar and practiced upon the vowel sounds till his throat was sore. He attracted the attention of a neighbouring wood-sawyer, and as the plump and rotund sounds exploded from the depth of the earth, he left his work, peered into the low basement windows, and seeing the shadow of a human being on the coal-heap, exclaimed in surprise—"What does that man mean?"

He pursued the system with great perseve-

rance, until his voice was ruined. The frequent inquiry was made,—"What has got into Mr. Pettibones of late, that he jerks out his syllables like so many bullets?" At the commencement of the "second lesson," Professor Voccles began to train him on the consonants, peremptorily forbidding him to sink the value of those letters, but to bring his tongue and teeth together, and make his t's distinctive. The pupil did so. The course of instruction made it necessary that he should next go into the open fields, that his vocal organs might not be restricted by walls, but have free scope, and exert their power. He and Mr. Voccles stationed themselves about a hundred yards apart, book in hand, and they afterward lengthened the distance to two hundred, when they read dialogues from the third part of the "Primordial Elements." The place selected was a meadow, not near to any house, where Mr. Pettibones, standing in his morning-gown, with his head bare, shouted until the echoes replied again, and the cattle scampered away. He exercised upon the words "O, Jerusalem! Jerusalem!" and then upon this sentence, "Cut off thy hair, and cast it away!" For prudential reasons he concealed from his wife the nature of these excursions. He was

also advised to take much bodily exercise, and this fell in with the monition which he had received to "visit more." Whereupon he had his horse saddled, and began to scamper about the parish every day, neglecting his books altogether. He called upon the rich, and upon the poor, on the ignorant and the learned, and the air so elevated his spirits that he talked with a vivacity which was uncommon to him, and the people were greatly amazed. During these excursions he heard secrets which otherwise would never have come to his ears, and he got the vague hint that a conspiracy was forming against him, which made him uneasy.

One day, he was shouting in the amphitheatre, "O, Jerusalem, Jerusalem," not aware that his motions were closely watched by a committee of his congregation and before he had got half through, he was bundled into a small wagon, and driven precipitately from the ground. In vain did he protest with all his might, and inquire what where the motives of the party. He addressed them also in the calmest manner. They merely smiled, and remarked, "How cunning he is. You might almost suppose him to be sane." He was hurried off to a neighbouring house, and closely watched, no attention being

paid to what he said. A physician was in attendance who felt his pulse, and who prescribed brain-cooling remedies. Now when these well-intentioned people were persuaded of their error by the timely appearance of Mr. Voccles, who assured them that their rector was only taking a few lessons in elocution to improve his voice and to secure him from an apprehended attack of bronchitis, they let him go, it is true, but they clung to the opinion that he was acting very queerly. It put an end however to his pupilage, and he dismissed his preceptor, not thanking him for any benefit derived. Every Sunday he swathed his throat with gum Arabic, but in spite of himself, for a long time he exploded his words, and complained that his chest was a magazine of detonating powder. Mrs. Pettibones had also become very angry, and upbraided him in no measured terms for his folly. He had rested an entire month from these absurdities before he got back into his old method, and gradually resumed his former style of preaching. Then again he began to be piqued and annoyed at the continued phenomenon of the sleepers. For well nigh he at last despaired his ability to arouse them. He had tested every means within his power. He had preached high and he had preached low, he

had painted the pains of hell and the joys of heaven, but the rich man and the fat man, the farmer, the old lady, and the professor, were again caught napping. They leaned back, and they leaned forward, they nodded, they snoozed, and they snored away in every possible degree of somnolence, and he declared that nothing but Gabriel's trump would awake them. Thus did the Sundays of a year glide on, and no effectual changes were made at St. James'. The same complaints of dull preaching were occasionally heard, but the people stood it, and Mr. Pettibones had burned up the notes in his pocket-book, instructing him to "speak louder," "to visit his people more," "to preach at them," and "to cultivate his vocal powers." But he was convinced that there was something wrong somewhere. It was not his fault, he declared, because he had employed every device in the performance of his duty. One day, however, he was preaching, when glancing his eye suddenly over the congregation, he perceived that the delinquents who had given him so much trouble were wide awake and staring directly at him. Their eyeballs almost started out of their sockets, and instead of being animated by the sight, he looked at them with a kind of horror. There was some-

thing really unnatural about it, and he inwardly questioned himself as to what could be the reason of their strange conduct. But if surprised at this, what think you were his feelings, when upon a closer inspection he perceived that the remaining part of the congregation who had hitherto been attentive, had taken the place of these, and were all sleeping. Men, women and children nodded in their seats, and the sexton awoke them after the benediction. This was indeed a puzzle and a mystery. The more he reflected upon it, the more he groped in the dark as to the cause of so strange an incident. He would have again appealed to the seven wise men, but he had tested their advice already, he had exhausted their knowledge. He discarded his books and papers, he sat in his arm-chair all day and looked at the wall, and when his wife asked him what he was about, he replied that he was studying the philosophy of mystery.

There are times in a man's life when he comes to a dead stand and refuses to advance a step farther, as if a wall were raised up before him. He casts back his eye over the long road which he has been travelling, and strikes his cane in the ground. He begins to unravel his work as a boy does a ball of yarn with which he has played

so long. The parson had complained that others did not understand him, that he could not understand others, and he began to suspect that he was a stranger to himself. "Beyond all doubt," said he, "our individual being is like a recondite book, more so than the deepest treatise which I am aware of on dogmatic Theology. The chain of causes and effects are very baffling in their connections. Here are people whom I have been familiar with for these twenty-five years—yet my preaching, which would seem adequate in human judgment to stir up their minds by way of remembrance, does not accomplish its end. It has become a question of duty with me whether I ought not to relinquish this charge, now that I am in the prime of my life, and seek to do good elsewhere."

"Yet why should I?"—(Mr. Pettibones asked and answered his own questions)—"God's ways are not our ways. Who knows but what the seed sown may bear fruit in time to come? Does it not show in me a spirit of sinful impatience to expect that all things should be done in my own time—a want of trust, to call it by no worse name?"

"Yes, it does; let me understand myself on this matter."

"Because a few people refuse to hear, should I withdraw the bread of life from the multitude who are hungry?"

"By no means."

"Could they find any one else who would break it to them so well at this juncture?"

"Probably not, or else God would not have placed me in this position."

"Is it not then striving against God to be desirous of any present change of circumstances?"

"Undoubtedly."

"Have I not sufficient encouragement to continue to proclaim the truth to them, whether they will hear, or whether they will forbear?"

"Answer your own question, Pettibones, by asking another—Should a man neglect the unfruitful tree because the ground is hard and stony? Should he not rather dig about it, as it is said in the thirteenth chapter of St. Luke?—When it produces no fruit at all, then leave it to its own barrenness."

"But again:—may I not sacrifice the vast amount of good which has been done during the many years of my ministration, some of which has escaped from my mind entirely owing to the feebleness of memory, and a great deal more perhaps which will never be known in this earth-

ly pilgrimage—the words of doctrine and reproof which, when least expected, have found a lodgment in the sinner's heart?"

"Decidedly, no servant of God can know the good which he does in this world."

"Nor the evil."

"True, true, but the latter shows itself more clearly. Taking all things into account, have I not more reason to be thankful for the former, considering the peace and prosperity which has crowned this portion of the Lord's heritage? for families knit together in the bonds of affection, for the lively bands of little children which look up to me as a spiritual father, and for the prevalent state of religion in the parish? NOTE. That sloth is not so bad as malice, envy, hatred, and all uncharitableness."

"Once again:—in looking backward, have I given any man occasion to be my enemy?"

"Not knowingly."

"Do I cherish toward Mr. Snapjohn the slightest ill-will, and would I not at the present moment make all sacrifices to promote his temporal and spiritual welfare, and to restore him to a better state of mind?"

"Verily, I can place my hand upon my heart, which throbs with no sentiment but that of pity

for him, and can say that I would walk any number of miles to serve him, that I forgive him from my heart for any insults which he may have heaped upon me, and that if he were now on his death-bed, unprepared as he is, I would go to meet him."

"I have done all which is incumbent. Why should I unnecessarily afflict myself?"

"Once again: After this severe rasping which I have given my conscience, is there any thing more, now worthy to be inquired into?

"If there is, I shall ferret it out, and it will come to light in the course of my investigations. I shall leave no stone unturned in my endeavours to follow in the steps of my Master, to raise the dead, and if possible, to cast out devils."

Thus he discoursed pleasantly and fluently with himself, until he got into a complacent humour, and postponed the philosophy of mystery until the next day.

There was an old shoemaker living near by, of industrious habits, a sarcastic turn of mind, and distinguished somewhat for his dry and sententious speeches. He was pious withal. Thither Mr. Pettibones repaired, partly to have a conversation with him, and partly to see about the repair of his boots. He was sitting as usual

on the low bench where he hammered his lap-stone, and drew the waxen thread, and plied his awl twelve or fourteen hours out of the day, and had done so for forty years. His back was bowed, and his chest contracted, but his brow was somewhat broad and expansive, and he wore a pair of spectacles with tortoise-shell rims. He scarcely looked up or spoke, except when directly addressed, and then as briefly as possible, but continued to batter his leather upon the smooth stone, as if he thought only of getting his living, and he emphasised his remarks by knocking in the head a wooden peg. Mr. Pettibones was at variance with him, and had been since he came into the parish, because Mr. Wacclesea refused to be baptized. He held also certain views about heaven, hell and the devil, which Mr. Pettibones had tried hard to get out of his head. He set him down on the whole as a perverse man, and ignorant in theology, he declared, "as a horse," but remarkably gifted in common sense. He liked to sit down on the smooth bench in his shop and chat with him for an hour, and to watch him at work, and to get the benefit of those peculiar saws and maxims for which he was noted. It now occurred to him that he would apply to Mr. Wacclesea to solve the enigma which worried his

mind, for he was awake on the Sunday alluded to, thus making up the complement of seven—that odd number—and supplying the place of the departed Snapjohn.

"Hard at work at your occupation," said he; "labour seems sweet to you."

"Bread is not bitter." Rap, rap, rap.

"The Evil One will scarcely think it worth while to look into your habitation."

"There's room enough for him." Rap, rap, rap.

"It is for idle hands that he finds work," said Mr. Pettibones, busily twirling his cane, and venturing to quote from the Proverbs.

"In idle hearts as well." Rap, rap, rap

"You may indeed say so. He goeth about like a roaring lion."

"Like a lamb likewise," whetting his knife and paring the leather.

"Most unquestionably he does, my friend; he wears all shapes, and puts on all the colours of the rainbow, although he isn't like the rainbow."

"Yes, he is."

"Why so, Mr. Wacclesea?"

"Because he's opposed to the sun."

"To be sure, to be sure—and beside that, he is an arch enemy."

The parson was so delighted by this remark of his own, which leaped out of his mouth almost in advance of his intention, that he put down his cane, rubbed his hands together, and laughed until the tears rolled out of his eyes. "But," said he, recovering himself, "this is too serious a matter. There is a very general belief that this being is a mere fiction, a personification and not a person, the Father of Lies, who sometimes comes into the presence of the best of us. I am so satisfied of his reality, that sometimes, my friend, I persuade myself that I almost see him."

"I hear him."

"You do! I want my boots mended. Those last ones which you made me gave out very soon, Mr. Wacclesea. I want you to make them stouter. By the by, my dear friend, I have something on my mind. Now let me ask you one question, as you have a sagacity in some things which is not accorded to the common run of men. I have noticed that a few persons, owing to lukewarmness—or, to be more charitable, for I verily believe that the majority of them, under the influence of my unworthy preaching, are informed by the right spirit, and by their

punctual attendance upon my ministrations show that they are desirous to be led into the right way—a certain number, I will say, out of the infirmity of their natures, the spirit being willing but the flesh weak, have hitherto invariably gone asleep, and have resisted all appeals which I have made to their consciences. Upon a late occasion, as by the thunder-tones of the Gospel, I roused them all up."

"You did not do it."

"I say I did."

"You did not do it."

"Of course I did not, in my own peculiar strength, but I was the weak instrument of causing it to be done. There were seven of them, yourself one."

"One?"

"You too. I merely assert that my discourse affected them, and kept their eyes open."

"That did it not. The cause was different." Rap, rap, rap.

"What then? While you are making your shoes, will you have the kindness to let me know?"

"Well then—*rap*—their attention—*rap*—was arrested—*rap*—not by any thing which you were saying—*rap*—but by observing—*rap*—that all the

rest of the congregation—*rap*—were nodding in their seats." *Rap, rap, rap, rap, rap, rap, rap,* RAP!

"Mr. Wacclesea, you amaze me! More than tongue can tell! Good Heavens! I observed the same phenomenon myself. But what made the attentive ones give over, who have always pricked up their ears at my discourse? They have listened for many Sundays."

"Because natur' at last became exhausted."

"Bless my heart! what kind of natur' must that be! May the Lord guide you into the right paths."

With that Mr. Pettibones withdrew, saying to himself, "A perverse man!—a wrong-headed man!—an *infidel!*—a SHOEMAKER!" and he walked home grumbling about wax-ends, pig's bristles, lap-stones, wooden pegs, and such things.

"Pet," said his wife, as she entered into his study—she sometimes had the familiarity to address him by that endearing abbreviation—"another five pound note would prove acceptable."

"Be thankful for what you have," said he, "and do not disturb me. I have been dealing with myself, and giving my conscience a severe examination. Go thou and do likewise."

The ladies of St. James' in the vicinity of Jacob's Well had formed themselves into a sewing society, and met together weekly for the manufacture of needle-cases, slippers, and bachelors' pincushions for the promotion of any good object —also for the discussion of such matters as were connected with the temporal or spiritual prosperity of the parish. They were assembled one evening in a comfortable parlour, the fire blazed on the hearth, and they had thrown aside their work for a few moments, while they were recruiting themselves for farther labours in cups of strong green tea. Presently their tongues were relaxed, and they launched forth upon Christian topics.

"I think," said the President, "that the Rector's wife takes little interest in the affairs of this Association. She has not favoured us with her delectable presence for four weeks."

"No, she says that she finds enough to do with her own household, which shows very plainly how much she thinks of the cause of Missions."

"Poor thing—it is suspected that she has trouble enough within doors. Mr. Pettibones' conduct requires explanation. They do say that his mind is not sound."

"It is more likely that he is getting childish,

and don't know when he repeats himself. Those old sermons never have built up the parish, and never will do so."

"He acts very queerly. Sometimes he mumbles, and at least where I sit, it is impossible to hear a word that he says; at another time he roars as if we were all lunatics. He is making a great fuss because some people sleep under him."

"It always has been so, and he has only within a short time found it out. The least said about that, the soonest mended. He had better keep those people in order in the gallery. They behave shamefully in the choir."

"He has insulted Mr. Snapjohn, Mrs. Billincoo thinks very hard of him, Mr. Voccles is going away, and there are others who will soon follow. So vain a man never wagged his head in a pulpit."

"He has not written a new sermon in ten years."

"Belshazzar's feast I have heard with my own ears six times."

"Lazarus in Abraham's bosom, I have heard eight times."

"To say nothing of the "Ten Virgins," "the Good Samaritan," and the "Unjust Steward."

"Yes, and Nebuchadnezzar."

"True, the Nebuchadnezzar sermon is one of his greatest, (so he thinks,) and has been more strummed upon than Belshazzar. Oh, he's crazy —there can be no question of is. Only to think of his going out into a cornfield, and shouting— 'Jerusalem! Jerusalem! Jerusalem!' with all his might. Mrs. Sharp's maid could not milk the cows for his outcry. Instead of working for the poor savages, it would be better to save up our money and buy a straight-jacket for Mr. Pettibones."

This last remark provoked a spirit of merriment among the ladies, and the tea was served again. After that, one of the number read a good book for the edification of the rest; but after reciting a page or two, turned down the leaf for a future meeting, if ever the Ladies' Society of St. James', Jacob's Well, should meet again.

They then entered upon the discussion of a subject which had been partly treated of before, but which had been postponed for the present session—as to what is the true nature of Charity. One said that it consisted in giving a tenth of all which you possessed to feed the hungry and to clothe the naked.

Another asserted that it was necessary to throw all that you had into the treasury.

A third declared that this after all was but a small part of charity.

Just at this interesting moment of the discussion, when they had got out the money bag, and were counting the bits of silver which had accumulated in the treasury, poor Mr. Pettibones himself came in without knocking at the door, by virtue of his office. He was in a pleasant mood, and shook every member of the company heartily by the hand. Perceiving the money on the table, he glanced at it, and his eyes brightened. "My dear friends," said he, "you have not laboured for nought, you have proved yourselves to be faithful co-workers with me in the vineyard. Go ye on with the good work which ye have begun, and ye shall have your rewards. I am going to take possession of these funds, for our beloved church. I have been consulting an architect, from whom I learn that we need a sounding board and a new pulpit. The present arrangement is bad for sound,—bad, bad, bad." And with that he swept the money into his handkerchief, shook hands again all round, and went away.

There was a dead silence for a moment, then

the presiding officer ordered the teapot to be replenished, when the Society taking large draughts, and recovering from their surprise, conjured up before their excited imaginations the Rector of St. James' Church, Jacob's Well, standing before them in his gown, and themselves with furious little hands absolutely tearing it off his back. Some laughed, some wept, and a lively little chorus proclaimed the Rector to be a thief. They packed up the thread, needles, and bits of calico in small boxes, tying them up with strings fastened into spiteful and indissoluble knots;—they put their thimbles in their pockets, formed a ring about the fire, and Resolved, that the Association, so far as it related to the affairs of the heathen, was dissolved. The crisp leaves uncoiled and struggled together at the bottom of the hot water, and there was a tempest in the teapot.

Notwithstanding the vigour of the attack which was then made on the absent Mr. Pettibones, the arbitrary nature of his act did not brew up a storm sufficiently violent to sweep down the parsonage, nor was his gown quite torn into rags. Some people thought better of him than they had done before, and even ventured to vindicate his right.

On the next Sunday he gave notice that the

church would be shut up one week for the sake of repairs, that funds having been provided by "effort and liberality" on the part of the ladies of the congregation, a new pulpit would be erected, from which it was hoped that their rector would be enabled to dispense to them the bread of life with more comfort to himself, and with better advantage to the people. By the extraordinary pertinacity with which he went about this project, he was enabled to carry it through.

"Very good," said the vestryman who had exhorted him to speak louder, "let us have a new pulpit, and we will then have a new preacher in it."

Shortly after this, the rector fell into a fit of melancholy, and continued in this state so long that Mrs. Pettibones called on his "particular friends," and requested them to come and "hold up his hands."

The physician was first on the ground, and said that his liver was a little disordered, and prescribed accordingly.

The Senior Warden coincided in that opinion, and advised him to take leave of absence for six months.

"I shall do no such thing," said Mr. Pettibones. "When I am gone from this beloved

field of action, you shall look upon my face no more. When I remove at all, Sir, it will be to my long home. There the wicked cease from troubling," and he rubbed his eyes.

"Recollect," replied the other, "that you have resided twenty-five years among us, during which time you have been—"

"Instant in labour," suggested Mr. Pettibones.

"And your mental and physical powers may need some recruiting. The Bronchitis, a new disease of the throat, is becoming very prevalent, and many clergymen of means, or who reside in very wealthy parishes, have found it incumbent on them to go over the water."

"Just so," said the Rector.

"Although that is not at all necessary. A cessation from labour is all which is required. Now I should not be surprised if the premonitory symptoms of this complaint—"

"Perfectly preposterous," replied Pettibones. "My voice is now strong enough since my late exercises to tear the roof off. It comes back to me with redoubled power till I am sometimes astounded at it. No persons who are not drugged with the deadly anodyne of sin, or are not dreaming in their seats about matters of worldly

policy, could fail to hear it. I have been afraid that the new sounding-board, erected from a good motive, would be too much for it. Do not speak to me about Bronchitis, Sir; I tell you that my mucous membrane is sound. To be plain with you, my heart is sore vexed. There is the mischief. I want sympathy, I want co-operation, and some one to hold my hands up."

"You want a change of air more. Both for the sake of this parish and for your own—"

"I see it, I see it, I see it," said Mr. Pettibones. "You wish to get rid of me,—me who have frequently gone into that church, and built the fires, and tolled the bell, and played the part of an underling—a sexton!"—and he began to cry.

After that, Mr. Evelyn, according to request, arrived at the study, and by his cheerful demeanour did somewhat to dispel the gloomy clouds. He brought with him a bottle of old Madeira wine, of which he advised the desponding rector to take a little, and when that was gone, he had plenty more.

Mr. Pettibones shook his head. "It will do no good, Sir. But God forbid that I should discard remedies, that I should slight the kindness of my friends. I will at least try it."

"Do so at once," said Mr. Evelyn.

"No, not now."

"Now—" replied the other.

"Mrs. Pettibones, is there such a thing as a cork-screw in this house? I don't think there is."

"Certainly," replied she; "two of them, my dear."

"Well then, get *it*. Mr. Evelyn has come to hold my hands up."

The cork came out with a pop. "Have we such a thing as a wine-glass, my love? I fear that it is broken. Have we any?"

"Six," said Mrs. Pettibones.

"Very good; then they will not be, as they have been, mere supernumerary pieces of household furniture, thanks to my worthy friend."

"This wine," said the Rector, holding up the glass to the light, after taking a swallow, and when the subtle juice had permeated through all his veins, and struck with a sudden glow into his vitals, "reluctant as I am to take it, has the colour, the taste, and the smell of a genuine cordial." He poured it out a second time, and began to sip of it, and he continued to sip of it, and to sip of it. "I say that it is a cordial, whose salutary effects I am thankful to acknowledge in

the universal warmth which it diffuses through the corporeal system, driving off those black vapours which have so much troubled me of late, and persuading me that I have true friends remaining, of which you are one—of the most ardent, I dare say. I thank you, Sir, for your cordiality. I trust that I shall not stand in any need of the second bottle, to which you have made affectionate allusion. Do not send it, for if medicine of this kind will be of any service, this will be effectual. It already does me a deal of good, and acts like a tonic upon the stomach. I may have perhaps needed something of the kind without knowing it. But we are poor ignorant creatur's, and very seldom discover what is for our own advantage—and allowing that we do, have not the means of carrying it out. My friend, give me your hand. In the interest which you have manifested for me by this little gift, and also by your pecuniary token—received at the very moment when, God forgive me, I was about to find fault with the most wide-awake man in this parish—accept my thanks. I ask your counsel, I am grateful to you for coming to lift up my hands."

Mr. Evelyn went away, sent another bottle of Madeira wine, and the next Sunday sat bolt up-

right in his pew again, and was not numbered among the Seven Sleepers.

The procession of hand-lifters came however in single file, and did not tarry a long time at the parsonage, nor do much to raise the spirits of the disconsolate rector. He therefore took his cane in his hand, walked about the field, knocked at the doors of his parishioners, showed his face here and there, returned to his house, read a new book, and wrote a new sermon (occasionally,) and recovered so much lost ground in a short time, that nothing more was said about his oddities. The bell rang upon Sunday, the congregation came together, (Mr. Snapjohn excepted,) the parson preached in his natural way, and sometimes displayed so much vigour of thought, that the remark went round, "that was really an excellent sermon!"

Mr. Pettibones could not bear to be at variance with his fellow men, and the dispute with Snapjohn, which he had wisely dismissed from his mind, would sometimes recur and give him a little uneasiness. "I will not expose myself again in the presence of that unregenerated man," said he. "I respect myself too much as a Christian minister, great as my humility may be. His violence is beyond a parallel. His rage is like

that of a roaring lion, which would tear the little ones of Christ to pieces. I won't do it,"—and he struck his cane into the ground. "It could not be expected of me. There is his daughter, however, who should not suffer for the sin of the parent. I will try to reclaim her to the fold. By my judicious endeavours, I will win her with God's blessing, to the right path." And he began at once to carry those judicious endeavours into execution.

Miss Snapjohn was a tall, wiry young lady, with a sharp face, and wore a pair of glittering spectacles. One day he accidentally met her at the house of a neighbour, and approached to take her by the hand, saying in a winning voice, "My dear child, I am glad to meet you." He might as well have exposed his knuckles to a full charged Leyden jar. Miss Snapjohn replied with a sparkling vivacity, and her tongue moved blithely though not lubricated by the gluten of a drop of honey. She inherited the animosity of her parent, and after suffering a few moments from her implacable spirit, Mr. Pettibones turned his back upon her, followed by the echoes of her high-keyed voice. After that he gave up the Snapjohn family, to perdition, he was afraid, and

by a further act of philosophy permitted his mind to dwell on them no more.

I must now record the closing scenes of his earthly probation. One rainy day, after dinner, he was sitting in his library mildly rebuking himself for any thing which he had done amiss; a self-chastisement which he declared was most salutary to the soul. The notion seized him to overhaul his compositions. He therefore prepared his table, drew down his manuscripts from the shelves, and pile after pile he marshalled them before him. Standing behind the formidable battery, he exclaimed, "What a prodigious amount of labour—the result of many years!—How little appreciated by the ordinary mind. The ordinary mind cannot estimate what is called head-work. The ordinary mind does not attempt to realize the process. The ordinary mind however sometimes feels the result, as I hope I have at divers times had occasion to know. When I think of the praise lavished on my earlier efforts in the pulpit, some of which I doubt cannot be excelled by me now that I may be said to approach my prime, I have much cause to be thankful that I am so little influenced by such tokens, and that my head has never been turned. It is no thanks to me, however, poor,un-

worthy creature that I am," and Mr. Pettibones wincing a little under this last reproof, sat down and undertook the Herculean task of reading those discourses one by one. He turned over leaf after leaf, and read and read, making an occasional criticism as he advanced, and he seemed to derive as much pleasure from them as if they had been new. Many of them were marked upon the back in pencil at the time of their delivery, stating what distinguished visiter was present, whether the day was pleasant or the reverse, and with other memoranda put down much in the following way.

"G," Good.

"VVG—Very good; laid myself out in this discourse."

"Day rainy, and in consequence a thin congregation."

"E. very attentive."

"Mrs. B. came up to thank me."

"Belshazzar to-day. N. B.—Not to be repeated before Trinity Sunday."

'Thought I saw some eyes moistened at my descrip. of prodigal son in y^e^ above, as on former occasions."

"Much affected myself to-day—much gifted with enlargement, and extemporized very much."

"Ventured to preach my Paul and Apollos sermon again, seems to have been blessed."

At a later period the margins were marked with certain little hints for the preacher in the pulpit, such as "speak louder," "emphasize in this place," "fortissimo," "point at them." Mr. Pettibones while engaged in the reviewal of these sermons fell asleep in his chair, and continued so long in a comatose state that his wife came into the study to see what he was about. Reluctant to disturb him, she went out, and after the lapse of an hour returned again. He was snoring very heavily. She shook him by the shoulders, but he showed no symptoms of waking. He was aroused after many attempts and much trouble. There is no use in concealing the truth. It was the first monition of apoplexy.

Soon after this the Rector began to entertain a really miserable opinion of himself. It occurred to him that he had forgotten to comply with the exhortation given by one of the seven wise men, that he should expressly "pray" that the sleepers might be awakened, for it grieved him to perceive that they began to relapse. Whereupon he prayed with all his might and main to this effect, as well as a little on his own behalf. It is true he had "preached louder," and he had

preached "at them," but "what a great fool, and what a deplorable sinner I am," said he, "to have arrived at my time of life, and not to have done more *for* them. What am I?—a worm of the dust, and no man! Poor, *mee*serable, abject, sinful creature! What are these things worth?" he added, changing his whining tone of voice for one more resolute.

Forthwith he seized a handful of his sermons, which yet lay upon the table, and was about to throw them into the fire, but his wife arrested him in the attempt, spoke of the value of the compositions, and of the inestimable importance which they would be to posterity after he was gone.

"After I am gone!" replied he; "you may well say so, but that will not be long." The fact was that he was in great fear of the disease which threatened him.

"My dear," said his wife, "let me send again for the Wardens and Vestry to hold up your hands."

"The Wardens and Vestry!" exclaimed he, snapping his fingers with great contempt—for he had become irritable as well as humble—"I shall go to God for assistance, who knows my wants better than those men do. They are a set of

sleepy fellows, yawning under the invitations of the Gospel. Of what avail have been those sermons, especially when preached"—and he again spoke with pathos, using the same words—"by such a poor, *mee*serable, abject, sinful creature."

With that he made another attempt at the sermons, reproached himself with many opprobrious epithets, and threatened to "begin life anew." But he was unfortunately too late for that. Had the idea occurred to him before he reached his prime, he might have grafted upon his mode of instructing the people some features which would have improved it, and might have pursued his inquiries to the root of the matter. As it was, he was behind time. His eulogy was however written by no ungentle hand, and after a proper allusion had been made to the amiability of his character, and the long duration of his services, it was affectionately added—"May he rest in peace."

And may he rest in peace; and his failings, such as they have been described, meet with as charitable a construction since he is dead as was accorded to them while living. They engendered few enemies, which were even reduced in number when the object of them was no more seen. For if they brought their feelings with them to

the grave, they suffered them to melt away and to be lost in the memory of his kindly virtues, when they left him sleeping. And so it should be. The chaplet which Forgiveness brings to deck the tomb is not like wreaths of artificial flowers, but can never lose its grace and beauty when watered by repentant tears.

Since these events occurred, time has brought about many of those changes which are so perceptible and so melancholy to the latest survivors in a country village. The reverend heads are laid low, the blossoms and the withered leaves have been swept away by the same icy breath, the festive bands which circled round within so many dear abodes, have one by one unclasped their hands, dissolving company, while ever and anon the dirge is heard, committing to their last long home, another—and another—and another. The seasons glide into each other with a stealthy pace; the blue flowers of the spring are fast succeeded by the blooming summer; the autumn's fruits are garnered, and the wintry blast howls round our doors. The Earth has one harvest, but Death reaps the whole year.

As for the small congregation who used to

worship when our rector flourished, and with whom he reasoned of their frailties, they have passed away. They now lie side by side in the green church-yard, and sleep that sleep which till the Archangel's trump shall know no waking

THE CHILD'S FUNERAL.

Now he is dead wherefore should I fast? Can I bring him back again? I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me.
II. Samuel xii. 23

THE budding roses and fresh-clipped flowers of the spring are scattered profusely in the death-chamber by parental hands upon the little boy. They are the last, and sweetest tokens of affection given when the heart is too full to speak except by emblems. The silent tears fall like dew upon the fresh leaves, they drop warm from the mother's eyes upon the face of her only one, while she kneels and presses with her lips that smooth, fair brow, where the ringlets lie curled so gracefully. The colour is fled from the cheeks, the lids are closed over the soft, laughing eyes, the small hands are clasped upon the

breast, holding the rose-buds which bloom there as if in their garden-beds, while the yet pure and untainted form over which Death has but cast the veil of a sweet sleep, seems like an image carved out of wax or white alabaster. The departing spirit may have bequeathed even a smile to the lips, and removed all the traces of mortal suffering; the casket is still beautiful, though the gem has been stolen away.

The young playmates arrive by turns, gazing with a mute expression of wonder, for they can form no faint idea of death. There is a move ment to and fro as with muffled feet, while the preparations for sepulture quietly go on. A sensation is manifest, and a mysterious sympathy conveys the fact from one to another of the household when the small coffin is brought in, and the future tenant of it is tenderly lifted from the snow-white cot and placed in it, while his limbs are composed in the chilling neatness and primness of the habiliments of the grave. The last kisses are impressed upon the lips, the last look is taken, tears fall thick and fast again upon the brow of the beloved, the lock of hair is clipt away, the hands of the clock have reached their appointed place on the dial, in vain Affection pleads for a protracted vigil ; a stern Decen-

cy keeps down the rising sobs. The carriages stand waiting at the door. Let the bearers approach, and do their office.

The procession moves silently away from the bereaved house, the parents go to commit their treasure to the faithful tomb, while the outer world regards the event no more than when a sudden gust has wafted from its stem a leaf or blossom. This is indeed no figure. The bloom and fragrance of childhood are soon exhaled, though the germ remains,—and who knows but if it drew its nutriment from the earth, it might soon cherish a worm at its core. The only difference is, that if it be transplanted early, that summer can disappoint no promise which is merged in a celestial autumn, and there is no imperfection in the golden fruitage that adorns the gardens which are watered by the pure river of God.

The memories of the just however pleasant must be mingled with some bitterness, but a child's are without alloy. Many and many are the thoughts which we have of these departed little ones, and as they come back running and flying from the far distance into the open arms of Remembrance, the atmosphere seems imbued with sweetness, filled with the petals of flowers

and with the wings of butterflies, and with singing birds, while the bright form of a Psyche emerges from every tomb.

A child fills up a large space in a human heart, however much it may be pre-occupied by cares, or given up to worldliness. It is by absence often and not by presence, by the want and not by the possession that the value of an object is made known. You enter into some house replete with the adjuncts of worldly comfort, the snug chambers all deftly furnished, the walls hung with pleasant pictures, something on all hands to charm the sense, and steal into the heart with genial influences. You go there a second time and every thing has been removed. Forlorn and dismantled it has no tenant, the niches are unoccupied, the hangings have been taken down, no more the gardener trains the honeyed vines about the porch. Balclutha!—Balclutha!—A damp and a chilliness strike to the heart. So is every home from which a child has been removed by death. There is a painful sense of vacancy. How do the hands hang listless which used to be employed in momentary offices? The eye misses its accustomed sights, and the ear its sounds, and the heart everything, for a child engrosses all. In his electric vivacity

he flits every where within his narrow bounds, and needs a darting eye and hurried feet to snatch him from instant peril. He is a diligent student of the geography of his realm, and is familiar with all its places. He is in the chambers, in the kitchen, in the garret, in the pantry, on the stair-case, on the porch, in the garden, by the water-tank, on the edge of the precipice, if there be any, or on the brink of the stream, clambering over high places, courting all dangers, and fearing none. His voice is an all-pervading melody whose echoes come back from every nook with a ringing and hilarious welcome to a parent's ears. But when at break of day, at what time the birds flap their wings and sing their matins, no more when he used to nestle in his mother's bosom shall be heard his morning salutation, the first and sweet articulate attempts at speech, and when with every set of sun those oft-repeated still-reluctant partings can be known no more, the morning is bereft of its refreshing cheerfulness, and the night draws on with added gloom.

His place is vacant at the household board. That purest, simplest imitation of a Heavenly Father, the giving to a child its daily bread, that almost sacramental rite in homely sanctuaries,

which breaks the crumbs to craving little ones, and answers their appeals, wakes up no more the blended train of human sympathies, and lets the embers on the altar of the heart wax cold. Yes, dreary is the home which first misses those mutual interchanges that knit together all the happy family, and melt like holy elements into the religion of the soul. But more than all its winning ways, and temporal beauty, the parents mourn the bright example of a child. From those tender eyes spoke forth a love which the world knows not, and suspecting no disguise. There was exhibited a humility which considered no playmate too humble to be a compeer, and invited the beggar to be a guest. There faith essential worked its little miracles, and made the mountains move. That undissembled love, which wound itself just like the clasping tendril of the vine around its objects, that humbleness with buoyant and angelic wings which soared toward heaven, that faith so real, and beautiful, the very substance of the things unseen, are almost buried with the nature of the child. They scarce survive the age of manhood, when Reason lights her fickle lamp, and leads the steps astray. Of all things else we miss that loveliest of infantile graces, that guileless confidence, which soon

alas! experience will change to sad mistrust. Dead is the ear which will then listen to the story of a giant, though you should tell of one who burst the bars of the sepulchre asunder, and trampled Death and Hell beneath his feet. The eyes which glistened with delight, and drank in pictures of a fairy land, can see no heaven through the misty veil, and they who revelled in Aladdin's groves, whose limbs were laden down with sparkling jewelry, refuse to glance at all the amaranthine bloom and beauty where eternal summer reigns.

Thus indeed it is true that the child dies though the early frost and nipping winds may not have blighted him, while year by year round the cold heart, and stiffening form, the world will wrap and wind its formal cerements, sealing up the lids of innocence, and shutting out the light of heaven from the calm and loving eyes. On those dreary burials, where one by one the child-like virtues have been given to decay, and nothing but dry orbs gaze on with heartless apathy, when once the pall comes down, it needs a wand more powerful than King David's royal sceptre, and a more impassioned and despairing cry to bring them back. Far better is it to commit the loved ones to an early grave, than to see

aught which is unmanly grow up with manhood, or aught which is unchristian assume the form of Christ.

Why should we lament them? Can we bring them back again? They are embalmed in memories which will preserve them better than Egyptian balsams, and though it may be, when the festive seasons of the year come round, our joy may be attempered by a hue of sadness, no bitter drops shall surge up with that tender grief, which chastens mirth, and makes more deep the feeling of religious thankfulness, to think that while the form is absent, there hovers over the parental board the sun-lit wings of some child-angel.

THE TWO NEIGHBOURS.

A LEAF FROM THE NOTE-BOOK OF JEREMY BARTOLDUS.*

YE early dew was as yet glistening on y^e grass, and every where on y^e meadows and lawns of England y^e larks rising and singing in y^e sweet June air, to meet y^e sun, when I, Bartold, being up by-times, and striving to ascend with them in spirit, went forth on this day to accomplish what I could. For last night, when I lay me down, I said to myself, God willing, and to-morrow come,

* I have heretofore taken occasional advantage of the possession of some papers by an old English Divine, and have brought a few of them to light. The idea has sometimes been suggested to collate and edit the whole batch, but as they are written in so quaint and antiquated a style that they might not be relished at the present day, I shall content myself by drawing forth only a page or two now and then where it appears suitable to the occasion.

I will do that, which God forgive me that I have not at least tried to put in execution afore.

Being first carefully attired, as I doo esteem it a religious Dutie to have my Linen sweet and clean each day upon my Back, (no creditt either for Holdyng that in some sense, Cleanlinesse Be Godlinesse,) moreover having partaken of y^e^ warm wheaten cakes which at that bright and earlie Houre, good Mistress Barbour careful to set before me, I sallied forth, cane in hand, walking with brisk steppes, and saluting one and another of y^e^ good Peopel whom I chance to meet on y^e^ Road.

For I said to mysel, that as Pilate and Herod of old time, were for a Bad Cause and because they not love Our Lord, made Friends, so shall these two better men whom I now think of, (not prizing y^e^ Relationship of Neighboures) Be made for y^e^ sake of oure same Lord, good friens, in which Charitie of purpose God help his poor unworthy Servant to perform all which Be needful.

Whereupon, after some five miles it may Bee, hard travel, the sun becoming a littyl warm, I begin to see the end of my Journie, to wit, y^e^ high elms near the place where I would Goe, and passyng up y^e^ long Avenue between y^e^ said elms,

I knock at y^e door of y^e auncient House, and ushered in just as y^e Master of y^e same come down y^e staircase to Break Hys Fast. Seeing that I just in time, I refused not, but my appetite somewhat sharpened by so long walk, partook plentifully of what sett before me.

The meal being well over, I sayd to hym (whose Houndes yelping, and horns braying alreadie before y^e Door, for a mornyng hunt) "Belike you will pardon y^e Libertie in soe old a Man, and soe old a Friend—"

"Verilie," said he, laughing, but somewhat seriously, "I know whatt you will be saying, and you will alsoe oblige so old a friend by leaving y^e same unsayd. For we all know our own Businesse best, and some Thynges, to speak plainly, brook no intermeddling, whereof y^e matter in hand is one."

Then knowyng his firm Purpose, and what sort of a man he was, also fearing that by my great suddenesse of endeavour I had foiled my Desire, as I seized his hand warmlie, (ffor I love hym sincerelie,) the tears come unbidden into mine eyes, and I not able to speak. On which, perceiving my Emotion, he said—

"Surelie, good my Friend, I cannot refuse to listen to what you would say, and so mar our

pleasaunt meeting. So speak it freely, and speak it quickly, and I too shall not be behindhand to Declare my mind, for I hold to great candour and promptness of speech in every true man."

Soe after a lyttyl Preface, lest I upset y^e^ whole Intent of y^e^ Visitation, I did kindlie Beseech hym to be no longer at variaunce with hys neighboure, whereupon he again Interrupt mee by Saying that he "Bore no ill Will, but further he wished no more Knowledg of y^e^ man, for it not Profitable, and to be absent from one another y^e^ Best for Both parties."

But I knowing that Hys Adversarie was both true and Trusty, and that it was Misunderstandyng, and not Real Cause couple with mutuall pride that kepit y^e^ two Apart, and no petty and inexorabel meannesse on the One side, such as will justifie a man to make up his mind that Companionship must cease ;—no great chasm, or insuperabel Gulf seperating two Divers natures, —and knowing too that y^e^ Happinesses of Both Gentlemen, though they were fain not to acknowledg Itt, did mainly depend on some Mediator, did not therefore cease to woo and persuade with Mild suggestions, which he did kindlie receive, but at the same time parry with argument. But the more he spoke the Contrarie,

the more I did feel that he was coming round to a better Dispositioun, and when he said that he had heard franklie all which had been advanced, and that I must Counsell hym no more about ye mattter, somethyng mysterious within me sayd that by God's help I had accomplished ye Object, and that he would most assuredly Doe what he said he would nott do, to wit, be reconciled with hys Neighbour. And soe it turned Out.

For walking with hym down the Avenue, I having out of Judiciousness dropt ye subject, and conversing of other Matters, it so chanced that having paused a moment to take leave at ye Porter's Lodge, whither he accompanit me, the very individual, hys Inimical Neighbour passed by. An awkward Rencontre truly! Seeing me, and Desiring to speak, he however coldly saluted Either of Us, and was passyng On, but I not to be soe outdone, took hys hand, and Inquired about ye Health of hys Family.

Then seeing by ye eyes of ye two neighbours that they Did not trulie Disrespect each other, and that ye chance once gone never perhaps Regained, I placed their hands together, and they not refuse a mutual grasp, looking silently the one at the other, half smiling, and presently ye one who came up last, breaking ye pause, boldly

and nobly said, while hys eyes moistened with tears, "I am ye one who has been to blame in this matter, and doe acknowledg the same."

Whereupon the one so addressed, shaking his hand with a right cordial grasp, did make replie,

"Say no more, if ye would not hurt me, and let by-gones, be by-gones."

Then Nothing would suit, but that the three should walk back to ye house, and drink wine together, which we did with much merry laughter and conversatioun, and they did even propose that I should join them in ye hunt, but I saying that their red coats not fit me, they did readilie excuse me from the same. Then seeing that the proper time was come for me to take my leave, I did pass away, as if nothing had happened, but not until ye Master of ye house, parting with me at ye Door, did quietly whisper in my ear, while a tear rolled down his cheek, and a smile lit up his manlie countenance,—"My friend, you were right. Blessed are ye Peacemakers!"—and soe I walked home, bringing good store of wayside flowers to Mistress Barbour, and recreated by ye sweet perfume of Forgiveness which was wafted to ye skies.

THE HEART OF ADAMANT.

A Tale.

[FROM OLD MR. PRUDDEN'S MSS.]

THE course of my pilgrimage has been happy, and now that the evening of my days draws on, I can declare that I have enjoyed the noonday, and take no less delight in the golden splendours of the setting sun. Those who were dearest and most closely connected with me have one by one slipped away by the loosing of the silver cord, yet the painful parting has been soothed and mitigated by tender mercies, and by the assurance of an extatic meeting beyond this vale of tears. I am alone now, but more strengthened

and supported by God than ever. "Thou art with me, thy rod, and thy staff, they comfort me."

I have seen a seedling vine, clinging to twigs and brambles at the foot of an immense oak, till presently some passer-by whipt out his knife, as if in very wantonness, and cut away the briars, and trimmed the vine, until it bled from its very heart. And first it drooped and pined, and with green tendrils stretched vainly after its slight support; but presently it rose in thrifty vigour, and threw itself upon the oak.

So has God dealt with me, and as my nearest succours one by one have been removed, I have felt the mighty arms which bore me up above the earth. The vine in its tenderness clasps the small plants more passionately, but it bears its better clusters, and sheds forth sweeter fragrance when its gnarled and knotted branches tower aloft, and intermingle with the strong-limbed oak. There is no support like God.

I am old, yet hale and vigorous. I may live a score of years, or, what is more likely, by the attenuation and snapping of some little cord, I may pass away in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye. When I walk through the village church-yard, I feel like one who mingles in a crowded re-union of old friends. It is but waving

the wand of Memory, and from the mouldering dust they start up as if the last Angel had aroused them with his trumpet. There is no grave with whose tenant I have not been familiar; and in the few moments during which I tarry at a head-stone, I am like one who has glanced over the pages of a pleasant biography—one of Walton's Lives, perhaps. Here is a child who once ran to meet me with wild hilarity, as I approached the porch of yonder cottage, the last time I remember with his hand full of fresh-blown roses, upon the first of May,—picture of health and innocence and beauty—his auburn hair parted above his brow, and flowing down in ringlets over his shoulders. Here slumbers my friend at whose board I have so often feasted, and met him day by day for a score of years in every circumstance of life which called forth joy or sorrow; in cloud and sunshine, at the merry bridal and at the house of mourning, the large-hearted, whole-souled man. I almost feel the pressure and warm grasp of his hand after so many years while standing beside his grave. And here is one whose head when it was laid down for the last sleep was as silvery as is now my own.

"Mr. Prudden," exclaimed one who perceived me continually rambling about the church-yard,

before or after service on a summer evening,—"methinks you must know the dead folk well by this time, for you pay them repeated visits."

"Yes," I replied, for he was a flippant youth, and I afterward included him also in the company of my silent friends, "for I have loved the sleepers well."

So soon as one descends into the vale of years, and all the strong and most immediate sympathies which bound him to the earth have been relaxed, when age in vain seeks out the fellowship of kindred age, and outer things are fashioned in some new, perhaps some better mould, the lot of such a lonely man is held to be extremely sad. But this is not the view I take of life. The end is full of brighter promise than the start, at least it should be to a Christian. To others I admit the shadows thicken, and the vale is drear. Enough of this.

There are three graves in All-Willows churchyard, side by side, railed within a single enclosure. Emblematic flowers have been planted over them, and diffuse their perfume in the spring time to a distance, but they do not mingle with happy memories, nor soothe the sense of the mourner, if there be any, nor come on the light wings of the wind, like spirits from a sweet, yet

mournful Past. No: they are even unwelcome in their fragrance, and smack too much of the dank and dead mould. Walking among the alleys and narrow lanes which wind between the tombs, here a painful feeling interrupts the current of a not unpleasing melancholy. I turn upon my heel abruptly, yet a strange fascination brings me back again to the spot, and there I stand, and muse and meditate for many moments, as if my all were buried in oblivion, or as if some saintly relics were disposed beneath my feet.

There is a triple lesson conveyed to him who stands above those three graves, if he knows the history which I shall now relate. Strange as it may appear, those who have committed great errors may become in that way the greatest of benefactors to mankind. Evil dispositions work a deal of mischief with impunity so long as they keep within bounds. But startling faults reveal their nature fully, and by their memorable consequence point back to an acknowledged cause. Hence they challenge attention, and sometimes lead to an admiration of virtue, more than the example of virtue itself. Yet think not that I have any narrative of dark and secret crimes to unfold, or any mysteries to reveal which have

been kept hidden. Far from it; nothing but a sad tale of which the like may occur daily.

About a half a mile or so from the village church, situated on elevated ground so as to command a far prospect, and surrounded on every side by smooth and gently declining lawns, stands a large square mansion, of stone, (once occupied by a family whom I will call Beauclerc,) now passed into other hands, but kept in good repair. Its large rooms are still well furnished, the grounds are in order, the grass is smooth and clean, the conservatories are replenished with exotics, and the garden is as pleasant a spot as could be found for a morning's ramble, but for myself I am oppressed by the same feelings when I enter the domains, as when standing by those three graves in the church-yard.

I remember when the foundations of the house were laid, and how carefully the owner inspected every part, and watched the builders from day to day, and sharply and curiously scrutinized every detail, to the very latches which were on the garret doors, that in all respects it should be strong, substantial, and well-finished. It was characteristic of him. How a man in middle age, or rather in the decline of life, as he was, can have the heart to erect a stately mansion,

and to surround it with all the appliances of luxury, surpasses my comprehension. It brings to mind one of those curt, moral observations, so thickly strewed through the works of a heathen poet :—

> Tu secanda marmora
> Locas sub ipsum funus, et sepulcri
> Immemor, struis domos.

Yet there may be something ascetic and perhaps not healthy in such a strain of sentiment. It is the way of the world, and perhaps always will be. There is no fault in the enterprise itself. Yet how rarely he who begins to build can estimate the cost rightly, and especially what the work is really worth when it is done. Such undertakings are very exciting in the inception, and very delightful in the perspective of pleasure which they throw open as they advance. Nothing is more apt to start the mind into a train of moralizing than the sight of a costly mansion rising gradually from its foundation, but the severe and sarcastic reflections which it excites are for the most part from those who have not the ability to build it. Discontent and jealousy are often the parent of wise sayings.

Well, this house at any rate was finished at the

precise time which had been agreed on, and in all particulars according to the contract. Otherwise there would have been no ordinary difficulties in the settlement of business, and the master builder knew it. It was also furnished, and put in order by a certain appointed day, and the grounds were laid out, and the seeds were planted in the garden, and the hot-houses were arranged, and in due time the family arrived, and a method and order were established as strictly as if to endure forever. Unhappily, however, they continued but for a brief time.

On a pleasant Sunday morning in the early part of June, the new family appeared for the first time at the village church. I had a habit, whether from vain curiosity, or what not, of glancing about to see who was present, and could invariably detect in the twinkling of an eye any strange faces, and also noted down who were absent. It was impossible not to be prepossessed in favour of the new occupants. Their apparent unconsciousness of the many eyes directed at them, their propriety of appearance, strict and subdued demeanour and attention in the house of God, to say nothing of a certain ton which they had, might have attracted notice. At a proper time I became intimately acquainted with a fami-

ly whom I remember now with some pleasure, and more pain.

On making a visit to Mr. Beauclerc I was less pleased with him than I had been at first. He was urbane up to the point where it was necessary for him to be in his own house, but beyond that, cold and reserved even to repulsion. When he stretched out his hand it did not close upon yours with any warmth, nor indeed at all, but seemed to be devoid of muscles. A man of warm impulse naturally recoils from such a person, and feels as if a mutual antipathy had already sprung up. For my own part, I thought nothing of it at the time; at least it did not lead me to form an unfavourable opinion. Some people who know nothing of the world are perpetually judging others through the medium of their own wounded vanity, and are swift to take offence where none has been intended. They are themselves the very ones whose society is to be avoided, for it costs more trouble to continue in their good graces than their acquaintance may be worth. They must have too many circumstances explained to them which concern them not. A parish clergyman of all others is galled and jaded and insulted often by such petty people, who are thinking always of themselves. He is called to

account equally for what he does or what he abstains from doing, while his motives must be searched and ransacked to divine the meaning of a glance. For my own part I would as far as possible cut the company of such disagreeables, and allow to others the same latitude which I expect myself. Those who let themselves out too freely often disappoint the promise of first impressions. I therefore formed no opinion adverse to Mr. Beauclerc, if I was not particularly smitten with his presence, and if he did not encourage me by the genial suavity of his manners. He was like a goodly book clasped with gold, of which the contents were yet to be read. Nevertheless he could not fail to excite my curiosity, and to set me at work in some secret surmises as to his true character. Several months passed away, and I met him not infrequently. He was never out of his place on Sunday, but whenever I saw him he maintained the same cold reserve, and did not seem to relax at all, except in his own house, where a faint welcome played over his features, like sunbeams on an iceberg. That he was not very agreeable company is true, for he attempted to draw you out no more than was absolutely necessary in order to keep within the bounds of true courtesy, but if you attempted to

draw him out, it resulted in embarrassment greater than that produced by a dead silence. That he was not destined to be very popular in the neighborhood was evident. He by no means kept aloof, however, from the exchange of ordinary civilities, he was on proper terms with all people, he did not lead the life of a recluse, he was just in all his dealings, not stinted, and even generous with respect to his purse. But the generality of persons were not pleased with a man who lived so near to them, and of whom they were permitted to know so little—and this feeling became one of actual aversion. His servants and the common people were afraid of him, but it was more from his manner than his treatment, although he was singularly stringent and exact in his dealings with them, and his process was very summary if they failed in any particular. The fault, they could not but acknowledge, was theirs —not his. It seemed impossible to penetrate into his motives, or to be admitted into fellowship with his heart. For my part I was contented to let him alone in his own moods, and to be satisfied with so much of him as I was permitted to see, for if he did not cheer me with his countenance, he never threw an obstacle in my way. His negative conduct could not be questioned. He

was at least respectful, if no more. I did not imagine that there was some mystery about him, and spend much time in a vain attempt to solve it, but entertained the idea, and was correct as to that, that he was a stern, severe, and self-willed man. That indeed was all the mystery which attached to him. His previous life was clear and open, made up of ordinary events. I heard it imputed to him that the ebullitions of his anger must be excessive, but it has since been declared of him by those who were best qualified to know, that he never exhibited rage in his life. There was indeed something baffling about him which perplexed those who did not attend to their own business. I can recall his aspect at this moment; a frame closely knit, of the medium height, features sharply chiselled, dark eyes whose exact shade you could not tell, somewhat deeply set, and almost of necromantic power. But the distinguishing part of his physiognomy was his lips, which were neither too thin, nor too full, but almost exceeded in beauty those of any statue, and when compressed presented the finest line, absolutely vanishing away at the corners of his mouth. His gravity was almost uninterrupted, but when he smiled, as I have known him to do more than once, it was a smile of unexampled

sweetness. It appeared so at least to me, but the effect might have been occasioned by the rareness of the phenomenon, and by the unexpectedness of the favour. From the description thus given, you might conceive him to be a most disagreeable personage, and that the sooner his place was filled up with one more genially disposed, the better. After a year's acquaintance, however, such was not my opinion. I absolutely liked him. Not that he had become hale-fellow, well-met, nor modified his disagreeable sobriety. But I had become accustomed to his manner, and perceived that it belonged to his nature or habit, or perhaps both. I did not like him *very* much, it is true, but I liked him, and there was reason to suppose that the esteem was reciprocated perhaps more warmly by him, although manifested less.

I have said that there was no mystery about him, yet one fact might well seem to defy all explanation—how a man with such characteristics should have won the heart of such a woman as his wife. Such misalliances are not uncommon, yet they cannot fail to occasion a fresh surprise. It was not that she exhibited a marked contrast, but a total opposition of traits, which no union could reconcile. Was it possible that she could

love him? Or did she only possess the keys of that cold, stern heart, and prize the treasures which she found within? She appeared to love all—why not him? Certain is it that she was one of the most gentle and winning of her sex. She immediately prepossessed all those who met her, both high and low, as her husband repelled them, and this intrinsic charm was more exemplified by contrast. She did not bear the marks of great beauty, but such as it was, it beamed forth in an expression which age cannot dim, and the decline of life cannot sully. It triumphed over the ordinary cares and sorrows of the world, which soon rob the physical form of those graces which are admired in early youth or in maturer womanhood. But the beauty of kindness contracts no wrinkles, and its bloom is softer and more transparent when it is about to pass away from the loving eye. Its fair cheek is not painted by artifice, and there is no worm of suspicion coiled up in the bud or at the core. So sweetly and unobtrusively did she move in the sphere where God had placed her, the embodiment of a religion which was real, and of a piety which was without pretence.

Such a wife in such a position is apt to be greatly pitied by those who imagine that her lot

is hard, and to be regarded as a mere cypher—weak, timorous, and paralyzed by fear. The knowing ones professed to discover in the dove-like gentleness of her manners the sure signs of a spirit broken down by constant tyranny, and from interviews which ought to have inspired them with no feelings but those of admiration, went away to indulge in surmise, and to harbour suspicion. In the cheerful alacrity of her behaviour, were to be discovered certainly no tokens of domestic broils or troubles, or of despondency. But the heartfelt sympathy which she manifested for the poor and stricken became itself an argument that she stood in need of the same in return. And there were many times, no doubt, when she did need it, but when most so, the solace could only come from God.

That she was loved sincerely by him who could best appreciate her virtues, and who was bound also by a holy pledge, I could not doubt, and that his affection was deep and impassioned in proportion as by the outer world he was suspected of being indifferent.. He was attentive to her slightest wish, nor had he ever opposed her—I had it from her own lips—but on one occasion. That broke her heart. Poor lady! There was no concealment in that part of her history. The

curiosity of the public was gratified. The world knew it, and made their own comments, and pro fessed their pity. But the wound was susceptible of no balsam, such as they could afford. Weak or not, she acted counter to her husband's wishes, and died in her act of disobedience. It was a rebellion in whose guilt the unfallen angels were accomplices, whose "traitor's arms" were furnished by sweet Charity, and whose penalty of death was repaid by a life the serenity of which could be disturbed no more.

I was encouraged to make frequent visits to this house, and if for no other purpose, it was agreeable to me to walk about the grounds, which every year became more beautiful and inviting as they were embellished by culture, and to derive a never-failing source of profit and recreation in the gardens and green-houses, which were full of rare and costly plants. This fact alone excited curious comment, as well as impertinent remark from those who have an idea that the Rector of a small country parish, to whom they look for so much, and whom they cannot do without, is after all a mere nobody, and social serf who must do nothing without their assent—something indeed like the curates of bygone days, whose geniality was developed in the

kitchens of the country Squire. I have thought that the account was a slander, and for the credit of the Mother-Church hope and believe that the description has been exaggerated in order to embellish an antithetic style. But that there is some truth in it, the transmission of similar ideas to similar relations proves. Some rough old Saxon elements have come down to a more civilized age. Now-a-days the most poverty-stricken parishes are not the less anxious to pick and cull. If possible, they will have no incumbents who are not gentlemen and scholars, while a few of the people manifest a disposition to treat them like the downcast curates of olden time. I cannot tell; it may be a trace of barbarism which lingers in the blood. They forget that circumstances alter cases. So thought Mr. Prudden, who preached humility, not humiliation. I ask pardon for these remarks; they are not made in a spirit of unkindness, but for the "benefit of clergy."

Once and once only in my intercourse with the Beauclerc family, I observed a handsome, dark-complexioned youth, with a keen black eye, silent, dignified, and aloof, as young men are apt to be. He passed in and out of the room where I was conversing, but he was not presented

to me, and of course I made no inquiries about him. I conjectured truly that he was a wild and disobedient son. His wanderings had not yet wrought a reformation, and his present visit was not accompanied by circumstances which were pleasant. As I went out, I observed him walking through the garden with his mother. Her arm was thrown around his shoulders, and she looked more like an affectionate sister trying to bring back the erring with words of tenderness and love. She beckoned me toward her, and with a beaming smile introduced me to "Charles." The tears stood in her eyes. I pressed his hand, and looking wistfully into his dark eyes, as if to read his history, addressed him in a cordial voice, and for the sake of her whose heart-strings were twined about him, breathed a silent prayer for both. Would that I could have merged my kindly suasion in those imploring words and looks which spoke so eloquently to the loved and lost. But methought that nothing could be added, and I even grieved that accident had made me an intruder upon a scene so sacred. Alas! I said, as I turned away, there is no grief like this, to know

—"How sharper than a serpent's tooth it is
To have a thankless child."

In a few hours afterward the youth fled away from some expression of parental severity, and returned no more. His name was never mentioned in my hearing, and I know not whether he is still living or dead. Perhaps he might have been redeemed by mildness ;—God grant that he may be saved through his mother's prayers.

I must now speak of one who is the principal theme of this plain narrative. Like some fleeting shadows in a dream of by-past days, comes back the memory of Alice Beauclerc. She had at this time just emerged from childhood, whose vivacity she had hardly yet learned to restrict within bounds. The lightness and buoyancy of her spirits carried her away, unchecked by those sudden expostulations which were uttered in such a tone that it was hard to tell whether they proceeded most from anger or delight. A beauty of the choicest and rarest kind absorbed all other feelings in those who gazed at her, and almost blinded them to any faults which she might possess. Her features were harmoniously cast in an oval face, and each one of them might be said to be faultless ; her complexion, though approaching the olive in its hue, was clear and transparent, and her eyes, shaded by long, soft lashes, were unspeakably tender and beautiful. Old man as I

was, I could scarce conceal my admiration when she came bounding toward me in half-childish glee.

But I felt an interest in her very different from that excited by her sylph-like form—a painful regard for the future of that bright and dawning career. This was brought about by a close observance of her peculiar traits, and by an apprehension of what would be their result in the position in which she was placed. She had by no means been permitted to grow up without control. Her education had been rigid under the severe eye of her father, whose affection had never allowed her to be indulged in every whim. The same discipline would have made another to be tractable and docile, and to have had a higher regard for the feelings of others than for the selfish gratification of her own. Such was the general effect which it had on her. But she had inherited a will so strong and resolute, that the very training which she had undergone might serve rather to strengthen than to curb it, when it should once take a definite aim. And this was manifested in certain immaterial things of every day occurrence, which it is not necessary to relate. Apart from this, she possessed a kindness of heart, and a sweetness of disposition, which

were the exact counterpart of her from whom she derived her being. She was a great favourite with those of her own age, however humble they might be. She never offended them by any pride of demeanour, her heart and purse were open to them, and there never was a May-day Queen so crowned and loved as wild yet gentle Alice. A certain contradiction of traits which she exhibited would have greatly baffled any who sought to understand her thoroughly, and it was evident that she gave equal pain and pleasure to those who loved her sincerely and best. I have always been a great student of character, and as a botanist would examine the leaves of a rare and delicate flower, I noted the peculiar traits of this young girl, and with a melancholy presage, unusual for one of my cheerful mood, I divined that her perfection would be attained through suffering, as some plants bloom more sweetly when cinders and ashes are strewed around.

One day when I was in Mr. Beauclerc's library he was more morose than usual. His brow seemed troubled, and some unpleasant matter was on his mind. He walked up and down pressing his lips together as if to lock up the thoughts which were seeking to find utterance. He was one of those, however, who would not permit

even his chest to heave, if possible, with inward throes, but rather let them prey upon his vitals. Whatever strength may be implied in such self-control, it belongs to natures, which as they do not claim, so they less frequently excite human sympathy. But he was evidently struggling against a desire to speak his mind on some subject, and I think he had sent for me for that end, and however tightly he still glued his lips together, I felt that there must be some imperative necessity. I imagined what it was, and wished to have nothing to do with it. I examined books, and scarce looked at him, in hopes that he would keep his reserve. To my great satisfaction, he presently made a move, and asked me to accompany him into the garden. The season was at its prime, the fruit trees were in flower, the bees buzzed busily about their waxen cells, and every thing on which I looked appealed pleasantly to the outward sense. As I admired these things, he suddenly uttered in a calm voice, a few expressions of disgust at the world at large and of bitter misanthropy. He cast his eye about on the general landscape, and glancing over his own territory, his lips curled and quivered with the worst expression I have ever seen. "What is all

this worth ?" he exclaimed, and again relapsed into silence.

I was full of an old man's oft-repeated solace, Christian counsels, thoughts of hope and trust in the unfailing providence of God through Christ. But it was vain to utter them on all occasions—and had I done so now, there is one word which would have come up to his lips, although it might not have escaped their portals,—" CANT !"

Alas ! to one whose mind is ill at ease, there is no mockery more cruel than that of singing birds and blooming flowers. No blight comes down upon our sweet terrestrial Eden. The germs and plants obey their physic laws ; no cherubim are set to guard their entrance or their egress, and still they keep their covenant with the sun, the dew, the air, the earth, and gentle showers, and clamber over stony walls, and spring again, and deck the fields, and blossom over all our melancholy waste. And yet these lovely outer forms have almost lost their consolation, for they are only emblems, and each grace they signify is scarce of earth, but heaven. For him who quaffs the bitter cup there is no freshness in the breeze. . . . . The stars in their courses fight against Sisera.

At last he inquired of me whether I were ac-

quainted with a certain person whom he named, to which I replied in the affirmative.

"May I be permitted," said he, "to ask a favour of you?"

"Certainly," I said, "I will listen to your request, and will, if possible, reciprocate your many kindnesses."

"Well then, it concerns me nearly, though I am so loth to speak of it. It concerns the peace of this house. I confide to you a secret which my own pride revolts at. In my intercourse with the world, I have carried every point by an inherent energy, yet I cannot—"

I remained silent.

"The person whom I spoke of, comes not here, because he knows that to me at least his presence is unacceptable. He shall never marry my child with my consent, nor I think without it. You know him, and he esteems you. Can you advise him?"

"No," I replied instantly, "I cannot. To meddle with this lies beyond my sphere of duty, and would result in nothing. I cannot do it."

He was not offended. A smile of exceeding pleasantness played with its rare and flitting light over his lips. He pressed my hand somewhat warmly. "You are right, my friend," said he—

"I acknowledge your discretion, and think more highly of you than before."

Having dismissed the topic, he assumed a tone of more than wonted cheerfulness, and having for the first time since my acquaintance with him, broken the ice, he conversed fluently, and resolved himself into an agreeable companion for the space of half an hour. But at the very time when I thought I was beginning to know more of him, I perhaps understood less of him than ever, and had yet to learn the inflexibility of his will, and the unflinching sternness and severity which formed the chief trait in his character. With buoyant, gliding grace, the fair creature who was the source of trouble, came down the garden walk, and threw her arms with wild hilarity about her father. He pressed her to his heart, and smiled bitterly without saying a word. We were standing beneath the arbour, in the same spot where I had exchanged a few words with the prodigal boy. It was the scene of a double meeting, but how different that of the mother and her son, of the father and his daughter. It revealed in striking contrast the characteristics of two separate natures, the transcendent strength and superiority of maternal love.

I turned upon my heel and went away, as an idle looker-on would depart from some spectacle, but with pain and grief to think how some men's Paradise is always blighted, and how many hearts defy the richest gifts of God to make them happy.

In looking over the pages of this diary, which has been kept with considerable regularity for many years, I find it to be full of little episodes in human history, the accounts of many a touching visit to the house of mourning, and of many death-bed scenes, all of which might be wrought effectively into works of fiction. But my experience was confined principally to the poor and humble, with whom my presence did some good. I resolved to visit this house no more, at least for the present, because it would be impossible not to notice the silent tokens of what was going on, which in my own opinion would have almost rendered me a spy. I had no power to avert the impending evil, but the time might come, and I felt that it would, when my sympathy and perhaps counsel would not be amiss.

Soon after this, in the slow and gradual increase of knowledge, I altered my opinion of Mr. Beauclerc, and disliked him too much to seek out

his company. Silence and reserve, after being studied a long time, will let you into men's secret character as much as outspoken words. They concentrate your attention upon other marks which are more infallible. He never forgave a delinquent, and never forgot an injury.—Such was the opinion which I formed of him, without any positive facts to justify the inference. How then did I find it out? Not by what I am going to relate.

There was a farm house by the road-side attached to the Beauclerc estate, occupied by an honest man and his family. One day while walking briskly on some parochial business, I observed the faces of the passers-by, and thought that they were kindled up with a vivacity of expression as if some stirring event had happened in the neighbourhood. I conjectured it to be rather exciting than unpleasant, not reflecting that the troubles of other people afford the most relishing food to the most of those who are not concerned. Having reached the farm house, I was about to pass by, but the good woman who had seen me coming intercepted me at the gate, and beckoned me in. An air of concern betokened that some disaster had fallen on that poor family, and I inquired the matter.

"Oh, Mr. Prudden," said she, "sad news!"—lifting up her hands, "there is no telling what a day may bring forth. Miss Alice has left her home, and can no where be found. Last night she eloped, and we shall never see her again. She was a wilful, wild girl, but we loved her better nor our own. No forgiveness in that quarter, no reconciliation, no hope, Sir. What will become of her poor, dear mother? She has got the consumption, and now it will be gallopin', and the house will be shut up. Her father will never see her again. What he says, he will do. He makes no complaint, he shuts up his mouth; but he is a dreadful man, a cruel heart if things don't please him. We're more afraid of two or three words from him, yes, more of a look from him, than whole vollums."

These tidings were true. Alice had followed the bent of her own will, and on the same day was married in some distant place. No effort was made to follow her, and after the usual gossip on the subject had been expended, I heard no more of it. I never after remember to have seen any of the members of the family again at the village church, except as they were brought there one by one, and laid side by side in those three graves, within the same enclosure. This

reunion occurred in the space of a few brief years. As to the house itself, and the domains of the family, they wore an aspect melancholy enough. You saw no one stirring, and although the whole place was preserved in the same exquisite neatness, and the systematic order of things remained unchanged, there seemed to be, and indeed there was no one there who really enjoyed the pleasure which it might afford.

Several years passed away, during which I received no tidings of poor Alice, save that she lived happily with her husband, whose subsequent conduct had been irreproachable notwithstanding the unfortunate step which he had taken. I had at first some faint hopes that the forgiveness and reconciliation which so often mark the course of similar affairs, would be accorded, perhaps at a later day, but ultimately wrung out of parental affection and anxiety. There I mistook the consistence of the man. He had not dreamed of such a thing as receiving back his lost child, but he had acquiesced in the dispensation and recovered from the blow in the same manner that he would have done had he committed her to the grave. Ever since my interview with him in the garden, he appeared to me more frank and cheerful in his demeanour, and dating from the very time

when I began to form a positive antipathy to him, to like me better than before. It did not cost me much pains to solve the philosophy of this, but I drew from it some hints as to my future conduct if I should ever be brought again into serious relations with him. Having from the first regarded him as a strange man, who must be studied long, before he could be properly understood, and having acted accordingly, I now became impatient of reserve, and longed to have a finger in his affairs. I never wished to be possessed merely of his good will at the sacrifice of all duty, but to let him alone until I knew how to treat him. He had admitted me somewhat into his confidence, he had asked of me a favour, by not granting which I had laid him under a heavy obligation, and I remembered the debt. When an opportunity should present, when a tender spot should be found in his composition, it was my intention to remind him of what he owed. The chance had not yet come, and it became certain never would, so long as I continued longer on the negative. I therefore resolved to find it, and that speedily. For my heart smote me. My gray hairs and my position would justify me in the undertaking. Let the

result be what it would, I meant to make to him an energetic and touching appeal.

It was a morning in midsummer,—let me see, twenty-five years ago this very day. That is what has induced me to fill up the account in my diary. Perhaps it may do some good, and every person is dead whom it concerns immediately. I was out of health, and lolling in my study, oppressed by the sultriness of the weather. Mr. Beauclerc drove up to the door, and dismounted from his carriage.

"Come," said he, "my friend. Get ready your portmanteau, and accompany me into the country on a two days' journey. You will be benefitted by the change."

Little argument was necessary. I hastily prepared a few articles of apparel, and took my seat beside him. He ordered the carriage to be driven to his own house, which I entered for the first time in several months. There I saw his poor, sweet wife, and a glance was sufficient to reveal that she was fast fading from the earth, and that the places which once knew her would soon know her no more forever. Her cheeks were wan and sunken, and spotted with a hectic flush, her eyes glassy and brilliant, and her form was much

wasted away. She received me with the same cheerful smile as ever, and as I pressed her thin hand, the tears started, and the emotions of her heart could not be concealed. There was something imploring in her looks, which I thought I understood, yet she said nothing.

All day I travelled with that inscrutable man. The conversation turned on ordinary topics, and led to nothing. How hard it is to find out the *mollia tempora fandi*, to touch upon matters of moment and of great delicacy at the right time and in the proper way, that a good object may be accomplished. At sun-down we stopped for the night at a tavern by the way. I could not sleep that night upon my pillow, because I felt it to be my duty to make an appeal to this man, and every moment the task seemed more impossible. The next morning at an early hour we were on the road, conversed of crops, farming, and politics, and at noon arrived at our destination. It was a small watering place, at that time little visited by valetudinarians, but since in great repute. It was not for the benefit of his health that Mr. Beauclerc had come, but to obtain signatures to a few legal papers. We were sitting after dinner under the shade of some high elms, admiring the pleasantness of the surrounding

prospect, when we observed a little girl approaching a hammock suspended from some of the trees. She was attired in deep black, and very beautiful. Mr. Beauclerc called her to him, and began to twine his fingers among her flaxen curls, he then seated her upon his knees and kissed her forehead repeatedly, the little thing looking strangely in his eyes, and not saying a word. This is a good augury, I thought. He has some tenderness of heart remaining.

"Have you any grand-children?" I inquired.

"There is one, I believe, although I have not seen it, and do not expect to see it. You will oblige me by not alluding to that topic again."

I looked at the little girl attentively, in fact I had been scrutinizing her from the first, and was more and more persuaded that she was more nearly related to him than he supposed. There was no mistaking those lineaments; they reminded me of one who had left her own home where she had once been so fondly loved, but from which she was so early lost. At all events this afforded the awkward opportunity for which I wished.

"Mr. Beauclerc," I said, "you will pardon me for asking—is your daughter still living? I once felt a deep regard for her welfare, and do still."

"She is," he replied, "but I repeat that you must not mention that subject any more."

He said this with some irritation of manner, on which I turned to the child, and inquired where her father lived.

"Papa is dead," she replied; "he has been dead since spring."

"And what is your name, my dear?"

"Alice Beauclerc V——," replied the little girl.

A change came over the face of my fellow traveller. He looked earnestly a moment at the child. Some feelings, of a merciful kind I hoped, seemed to be struggling in his bosom, and his lips quivered.

"Surely," I interposed, "she is very beautiful, the very picture of her mother, the same auburn ringlets, the same large bright eyes, and the like winning expression too. Oh, my friend, you *must* pardon something to my gray hairs and position, —you must forgive me the indelicacy of referring to what may not concern me—" I grasped his hand and looked earnestly in his eyes as if to discern some precious jewel in the clear depths of his soul—"I do beseech you for the love of God—perhaps to save the very life and spare the heart-strings of one who must be very dear to

you, act like a Christian, and receive your erring child."

I paused, and waited anxiously.

He made no answer. His resolution remained unconquered. He put down the little girl, not roughly, but with an air of determined indifference, rose from his seat, turned upon his heel, and walked away.

"Heart of adamant!" I murmured to myself, "the task is hopeless. Nothing but the hand of God can touch this man."

The effort which I had come to with so much reluctance was made, my hopes were blasted, and for the first time during my life I could do nothing to mitigate the sorrows of the broken-hearted. Perhaps also there was a little natural pique, but at present no resentment mixed with my discomfiture. My principal feeling was one of surprise, that a man whose capacity of loving I at first estimated was in the inverse ratio of that which it appeared, could be so recreant to the tender feelings of humanity—in fact that such a hopeless being should exist.

With a sad heart I took the child by the hand to conduct her to her home, to which she directed my steps. It was a neat cottage shaded with trees, with a court-yard in front, and with

running roses and honeysuckles climbing about the porch. I opened the gate, parted with a few kind words from my winning companion, gazed wistfully at the windows, and walked on to arrange my thoughts, and to decide upon what course to pursue. I intended to return thither again, and as I approached a second time, and made as if to pass by, my name was called—and almost shrieked, it was uttered with such earnestness—"Mr. Prudden, Mr. Prudden!"—at the same moment the little girl ran out, and seized my hand, saying, "Come in, Sir, Mama wishes to see you."

The next moment I was in the presence of Alice. She ran weeping and threw her arms about my neck, as if I were her only friend and protector.

"Alas!" she said, "did you know that I lived here, and were you going to pass by, and desert me in my affliction—my old friend, my guide, my teacher!"—and she wept afresh.

She was greatly changed. A few years of sorrow had marred her face. She seemed older than her mother, and retained scarcely a trace of her former beauty—and she wore the weeds of a widow. She asked earnestly after her mother, for although she had sent home many peni-

tent letters, no answers to any of them had been returned ; but I spared her at present the pain of communicating what I knew. She made me acquainted in few words with all the bitterness which she had experienced since I first missed her as a lamb from the flock—of the warmth of her affection for her parents—of the excellence of her husband—of the loss which she experienced, and with all the phases of her sad history. The alienation of her parents had preyed sadly on her health, and she longed most earnestly to return to the home which she had left.

"Mr. Prudden," said she, "can you not intercede with my father in my behalf, and ask him to forgive me. Oh, Sir, you do not know my father ; he loves me to this day more dearly than ever ; he has the warmest heart, although you might suppose him to be so cold—so cold. It is true that he is very stern, and his will is unbending ; he has said that he will see me no more, nor would he, if I were not his child—but I am sure that he cannot hold out much longer now that I am left alone, and without help in the world. And is my mother well ? Tell me truly, kind friend !"

I remained silent.

"Ah!" said she, "I see it—I see it!" and the tears flowed rapidly down her cheeks.

"When shall you return to D——?"

"That will depend," said I, "on the person with whom I came, who has some business to attend to. I came here with your father—"

I said it purposely.

"My *father!*" she exclaimed, clasping her hands in intense excitement, and with an expression of the most eager joy—"has he come to see me? has he sent for me at last? Have you come to call me? Where is he? Thank God! I see how it is. Tell me the truth. Do not keep me in suspense. I will go to meet him. With what transport shall I throw myself into his arms!"

"No, my child," I replied, "he has said nothing on the subject, but that is not to say that his accidental presence here may not be providential. I trust and pray that you may again be welcomed to your own dear home, to be a solace to your parents."

I could say no more nor less at this painful juncture. The little encouragement held out, I was sure would be blighted, for I began to know and appreciate the "deep things" of the man, and believed him to be immovable as a stone. Still I was willing to encounter his wrath, what-

ever form it might assume, and to undertake another embassy.

"Shall I go," said I, "and name your wishes this moment, and add my own prayers beside, dear child?"

"No," said she, starting to her feet, "I *will* see my father, and return with him."

She darted out of the apartment, and came back presently neatly attired, leading her little girl by the hand. She leaned upon my arm, and we walked slowly beneath the shady avenue, while those who looked at us might have supposed that we had gone forth for the recreation of a pleasant walk. It was a bright and balmy day in midsummer, and all the landscape decked with an Elysian beauty. My health and spirits had been exhilarated by the short journey. But what melancholy forebodings did I experience during that short walk, and how I dreaded the scene which was shortly to ensue! How I longed to prove a worthy ambassador on this errand of peace.

We stepped upon the piazza, and I saw Mr. Beauclerc standing alone in the little parlour of the tavern, in his usual attitude, with his hands clasped behind him. My heart beat, but that of poor Alice must have throbbed still more wildly.

I softly opened the door without knocking, and we ushered ourselves unbidden into the parental presence. For a moment there was a mutual gaze and look of astonishment. Then Alice rushed from my side, and ran and flung herself with a wild cry into her father's arms, sobbing—"Oh, father, forgive me," and many inarticulate sounds, which I could not hear. She clung to him with a grasp so convulsive that it could not be at once released; he felt the gentle burden as his child lay on his breast, and her kisses on his brow—while tears which were not his own streamed down his dark cheeks. The little girl, too, frightened at the scene, cried and held fast her mother's robe, while useless and supernumerary, I stood as if between Heaven and Hell.

Mr. Beauclerc permitted the paroxysm of his child's grief to subside, but while I waited to hear the angelic words of forgiveness breathed forth at last—for no human heart methought could stand proof against such an appeal—he clasped her arms with great strength, and did not push her, but put her as far from him as he could reach, and made a silent and imperative motion with the palm of his hand, accompanied by a look which could not be misinterpreted. It was the mandate of an unchanging

mind, of an unbent will. Alice cast at him one fond, reproachful glance, drew herself to her full height, arranged her black veil over her eyes, took her little girl again by the hand, and with a stately, mournful step, passed away to her doom, as from the last sentence and condemnation of an inexorable Judge. I accompanied and supported her on the way, opened for her the little gate, and without uttering a single word, returned.

Mr. Beauclerc was in the same position as when I left him. I stood before him and encountered his clear, cold gaze. He did not seem excited, although his hue was paler. He turned upon me at last with acrimony, it is true, but with a calmness which was more concentrated and worse to my mind than the most vindictive rage.

"Now, Sir," said he, "you will listen to a few words from me. I suppose that I am indebted to you and your impertinent interference for this unhappy meeting. I have treated you hitherto with the respect which was due to a gentleman, but you have stepped beyond the line of your duty. Our acquaintance must come shortly to an end. The carriage is in waiting; you came with me, and I shall be happy to see you back again to your own residence. After that, we part!"

I stood a moment by no means struck speechless, but at a loss how to express adequately the feelings which struggled in my breast. My indignation boiled up within me; a loathing and detestation of the one to whose ears the voice of Nature and of pity appealed in vain; a tender sympathy for the lot of the poor discarded, mingled with an absolute horror for the doom of such a man, almost defied words.

"Sir," I replied, speaking with the fearlessness and authority of an old man, and in a tone which I had never before assumed in the course of my whole life—"we will part company sooner than you have requested. The offer of your carriage I decline, and shall go home another way. I would not sit by your side, nor remain in your presence a single hour. I could not offer you my hand in parting; I will not say that I will follow your example and discard your welfare from my thoughts. I pray God that your heart, which is as hard as the nether millstone, by some miracle, may be changed; but mark me well, that the time may come, and must speedily, if you persist in doing as you have done, when you shall sue in vain for that mercy which you have never learned to grant."

He was not moved, nor apparently farther irri-

tated by this protest. He walked about listlessly as if he had not heard it, and presently got into his carriage, as though nothing had happened, and drove away.

That night I sat in the parlour of the little cottage, trying to soothe the sufferings of the poor child's heart. She had placed a prayer book and a Bible upon the stand. I turned over the leaves, and my eye fell upon this passage, which I read aloud: "When thou passest through the waters I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee; when thou walkest through the fire thou shalt not be burned, neither shall the flame kindle upon thee."

"That is true," she said, while her face brightened up, and her very soul seemed to emerge cheerfully as from some dark and trying ordeal, "HE will never leave me, nor forsake me."

A small package lay on the table. Her hard-hearted parent, had, it seems, from time to time, sent some remittances of money. The last one had been untouched, and she had just now sealed it up, and would return it by post. This was done neither out of contempt nor defiance; but the gift became bereft of value when she was conscious that it bore not even faintly the stamp of love. I could not but admire the admirable spi-

rit which she displayed, for there was no resentment in her sorrow, and her father was the object of her veneration still. And I would have been the last one to become her colleague or adviser against her father, much as I abhorred his cruel course. She would not have tolerated my assistance for a moment in such a light,

The next day I took the post-coach and returned. Alice said to me in parting, while a faint smile played upon her lips,—"I shall soon be going *home* to see my *father*."

I knew well to what her allusion referred.

* * * *

It was a wild March evening. The snows had almost disappeared, but a disastrous wind-storm howled without, accompanied with rain and sharp lightning. The elements contended as if the winter were fighting its last battle. The embers had died away on the hearth, and I sat listening to the furious outbursts of the hurricane with a degree of boding, and apprehension. Many an uprooted tree and roofless tenement bore witness on the succeeding day to its power, beside the wrecks which strewed the sea-coast for many hundred miles where its path had been. The very earth appeared to quake. To sleep in the midst of such an uproar would have been impossible, and I sat

anxiously waiting for the storm to subside. I had just examined all the bolts and fastenings of the old house, and said a few words to appease the fears of the domestics, when all of a sudden a loud crash startled me to my feet, the candle went out, papers were scattered all about the room, and the ashes flew into my eyes. In thoughtless haste I made an effort to strike a light, which was vain. Groping my way into the passage, I woke up the man-servant, and proceeded to investigate the cause of the trouble. The door which leads out of the porch had been wrenched from its rusty hinges, and blown into the hall. With great exertion we replaced it and nailed it fast. This fact I find recorded in my diary on the same night, together with many other particulars not necessary to relate now. I only mention this as one of the coincidences of that melancholy night, and as according somewhat with what I was to witness presently.

Scarcely had I re-arranged my books and papers, when in some quiet interval, during which the wind only sighed and soughed mournfully, I thought I heard the voice of some person without, accompanied by reiterated knocking at the door. Of course I could not attempt to open it, but

passed round the house, apprehending that somebody was in distress, or seeking shelter from the elements. It was the farmer who lived on the Beauclerc estate, and he said that his wife had been over at the Hall all day, and during the night, for the poor lady there was not expected to last a great while, and she earnestly desired to speak with me before she died. No doubt she wished also to partake of the last Sacrament.

I asked if he had received directions to call me. Much as I desired to have visited her of late, I could not go, under present circumstances, without invitation, or at least permission.

"Oh yes," said he, "certain. The widow's come home. *She* told me to come."

"Ah?" said I.

"Yes, I went and fetched her yesterday. The sick lady took on so."

Strange doubts flitted through my mind as I walked up the avenue struggling through the wind, and presently came in sight of the lordly mansion, revealed in the dim light of the moon.

Uneasy and uncomfortable I put my foot again into the house of that strange, implacable man, with feelings which I have never before nor since experienced. "Is it possible," I said, "that God

will now soften his heart? With Him all things are possible." We shall see.

A light burned brightly on a table in the broad hall. Ascending the staircase I caught a glimpse of the master of the house. He was standing silently and alone, as I supposed, before the mantel-piece in his library, and a few lumps of Liverpool coal blazed in the grate, casting a bright light over the books and pictures in the pleasant room. The physician was however in the room, conversing with him, although he was so situated that I did not see him. It was about twelve o'clock. Alice met me on the landing of the staircase, and wrung my hands without uttering a word. We advanced on tip-toe, the door was opened softly by the nurse from within, and we entered solemnly into the chamber of the dying. I approached and looked at her face, of which the smooth, white brow, as white as alabaster, was the only feature which remained unchanged. Her eyes were closed and her breathing was not audible. I believed that she was already dead, and looked at the nurse for confirmation. She shook her head. Soon the ominous rattle in the throat showed that death was at least near at hand.

Oh! how dreary was the hour! The ticking

of a watch on the mantel-piece, the muffled footstep, a sigh or a repressed sob, were the only sounds which struck upon the ear, while out of doors the tempest howled in its fury, and sometimes the dying moan of the winds appeared like the wail of spirits. On what errand had I come? Was it to see the last triumph of Christian faith, which bids defiance to the King of Terrors, to catch a glimpse of the bright beams which stream into the dark from the celestial portals, or only to behold a new and darker phase of those vindictive passions which secrete their poison in the sting of death?

At last the dying woman opened her eyes as if her whole soul and life were concentred in their brilliant orbs. As I retreated backward a few steps, she asked anxiously if the daylight was approaching. She had expressed a desire once more to see the sun. "Nurse," said she, "please raise my head. Is Mr. Prudden come?"

I came forward, and she saw me, and stretched her hand, and pressed mine, while she smiled sweetly, and with the benignant serenity of an angel. "Oh, my friend, why could I not have seen you before? Yet I trust, I trust it is not too late." She beckoned to the nurse, and whispered audibly in her ear. I heard her request

the presence of Mr. Beauclerc. How I dreaded another meeting with that man under such circumstances. A cold chill, as if the touch of death was on me also, thrilled through me as I heard his approaching footsteps.

He entered alone, and stood gazing at his wife. I could not for the darkness of the room observe accurately the expression of his countenance to see if any feeling were permitted to escape his stern control. I had never doubted that he loved her sincerely, until I made up my mind that he was incapable of loving any one. I afterwards learned that he had not forbidden, but that he had not consented to recal his daughter. She came upon her mother's mandate and passed unwelcome over the portals of her own home.

The dying woman made a motion for her husband to approach, calling him by his Christian name. He leaned over to catch her last words, for they were spoken in a low whisper. Summoning up her strength, and requesting those who stood near for her sake to control their emotions, she declared her readiness to depart, addressed him in tones of tender emotion, and bade him farewell. One last request she made upon her dying-bed. How many a time, in many a mournful case, had I been witness to the like, and never

yet had known those simple, sacred askings to be disregarded or denied.

But the man stood mute and dumb, like a statue, as if he had no power to make a motion, if he would. We held our breaths, and gazed eagerly, while the wife fixed her burning eyes upon him, and waited his response, but when he replied nothing, a change came over her, a dark cloud settled momentarily like a pall upon her countenance, methought almost the pains of hell got hold upon her, she reared her head upon the pillow, she waved her wasted hand above her head with a spasmodic energy, and with a strong, authoritative air, like that of some superior spirit, and in a hollow voice which seemed to echo from beyond the grave, she spoke aloud,—"Have you no affection for me?—In the name of God, and under penalty of his judgment, I beg and I command——Oh, Alice!—Alice!—my child!—your father!"

His knees trembled, his lips moved as if to speak,—I watched him most intently—I know not what he was about to say—but at that moment a paroxysm seized the patient, in the midst of which she died. The nurse held the candle over her, put her face close to her lips, and said, "She is gone."

I lifted up my hands and said "God's holy will be done." The husband stood at her head, and Alice stood at her feet, for a moment before she made this appeal. She had said—"Turn my face presently to the wall," and, "go to my feet, dear Alice." I conducted the latter to her father, and said to him, "Seal now that sacred promise of your heart with words."

He uttered no response, and whether overcome by his emotions, or struggling with his obstinacy, it is not necessary to say, but he pressed his hands to his forehead, turned his back, and strode down stairs.

I took up my hat, passed out of the house, and sorrowfully went home.

It will be said that all this is unnatural, and that is true. Perhaps that is one reason why I have been induced to transcribe the record from my diary. Those who choose to doubt it can do so, and may be permitted to set down their want of faith to the benefit of human nature.

In two days after, in the midst of a drizzling rain, I read the burial service in the village church-yard, and stood by until the earth was piled up and beaten down with spades upon the first occupant of those three graves.

After this, for the space of one year Mr. Beau-

clerc lived in that large house alone. The domestic routine was kept up with unfailing regularity, and the farmer sowed the seeds, and the gardener trimmed the vines, and rolled the grass, and attended to the flowers. The horses were groomed, the carriage-wheels were washed, and the seats were dusted, and the same servants were busily employed, while the master looked on sternly. Did I not say rightly at the outstart that the builder of a princely mansion too often raised up only a melancholy mausoleum of pride and folly, a monument to the fleeting nature of earthly hopes?

One day I was receiving letters at the village post-office, when a hand touched me lightly on the shoulder. I started and shrunk back with a shudder of antipathy. It was Mr. Beauclerc. "I would be glad to see you," he said, "will you walk home with me? I have somewhat to say which concerns myself, not you."

I went with him. We entered into his library, and he at once began on the matter in hand with his usual promptness, and with great calmness. "I once asked a favor at your hands, which you declined to grant. I shall ask another to which I hope earnestly, in view of our former intercourse that you will accede. You, no doubt, judge hardly

from my conduct, and it has been severe and cruel. Yet it has not accorded with the real dictates of my heart, but is the result of the struggle and victory of an incorrigible will. I have not acted according to my feelings, but in spite of them and against them. This is true. I need not tell you what my former history has been. It is enveloped in no mystery, but my mental and moral traits are of the strongest kind. My energy has been indomitable, and from the principles which have guided my conduct, such as they are, I have not been known to swerve. By the predominance of these, when they have come in conflict with other principles, I have ceased to be a Christian. I repent."

Here he suddenly pressed his hand against his heart, and after a painful expression for a moment, smiled with that sweet and rare expression which *his* lips only knew how to assume, and said :—"I shall not live very long, and have been aware of the fact for some years. It is not fear of death—I think not—if I understand myself aright, which prevails upon me now—but whether it is or not, I wish to retract and to be sorry for all my sins. Let God be the judge whether I am sincere or not. My child allied herself to the son of my bitterest enemy, whom I

forgive from my inmost heart. Would to God that I had relieved my wife's mind in her last illness, by doing that which I ought to have done. That sin weighs heavy on my soul. I am sick at heart, and sick in body, and I dare not travel if I would. What I have to ask you, is to go and bring my daughter home. I understand that her health is declining fast."

I did not think much better of the man at present for this late repentance, although after events showed it to be sincere. But he spoke so coolly and deliberately that what he said rather confirmed me in his want of human feeling. I however consented gladly to the proposal, his carriage was at the door, and I was soon on my way to the little village where his daughter lived. The next day at noon I arrived at the cottage. The doors and windows were closed up; it looked as if the house were not occupied, but after repeated knocking a domestic opened the door: "Is Mrs. V—— at home?' I asked.

"No, Sir, she is not:—she is in the church yard."

"What!" I exclaimed, in a most eager, startled tone, without reflecting a moment—"*dead?* You do not mean to tell me that she is dead?"

'Oh no, Sir, not dead, although that would not be surprising, but she is very ill, poor thing! She goes every morning to weep at her child's grave."

So then the little creature who had beguiled my former visit, her mother's only solace, had been taken to the angels. Of this fact Mr. Beauclerc had not informed me. Perhaps he did not know it. I sat down in the small parlour, and waited for the return of the mourner. At last with a beating heart I heard her footsteps, and the next moment she entered, and having drawn aside her veil, pale and haggard, the veriest shadow of her former self, the once gay-hearted Alice Beauclerc stood before me. Tenderly and in the best manner that I could, I disclosed my errand, and when I had done so, she raised her eyes towards heaven, she clasped her hands, and burst into a flood of tears.

Sweet, bitter tears!—outgushing from a pent-up fountain where clouds and darkness were so long reflected, and Hope shed down no starry ray. It is well the eyes can sometimes weep them, or else the heart would break.

Slowly and cautiously we retraced our homeward journey, for the hand of death was on my

gentle client, and I saw that she was fast descend ing to the grave. The morrow came, and as the setting sun just glittered with its latest beams upon the spire of the village church, we approached her father's mansion. The gates were flung wide open, the farmer and his wife stood near to give a passing welcome. The carriage stopped before the door.

I can scarce bear to allude to that meeting, which was almost too holy to describe. The conduct of sweet Alice was womanly and beautiful in the extreme, when almost sinking down with sickness, she uttered in a voice of love unspeakable—"My father! dearest father!"—and threw her arms about his neck, and leaned her burning brow upon his bosom, and struggled bravely to command herself. But for him, control was gone. The pent-up feelings of his heart burst forth with agonizing violence; his frame was racked, his sobs and moans were audible afar, he clasped his daughter to his heart, he kissed her lips a hundred times, he tried to speak, he sank and fainted in a paroxysm of the heart. I thought he would have died. Blessed reunion!—but only to endure for a brief space. In a few weeks I was to commit that lovely woman to the earth, and at the

same time, the little partner of her griefs was laid in the same grave upon her bosom.

That event wound up my intercourse with the Beauclerc family. Mr. Beauclerc I never saw again alive. His death was very sudden, as had been expected, and occurred in this wise. He had ordered his carriage to be ready at his door at a particular moment. In the most stringent emergency he never swerved from his punctilious habits. He was about to proceed to the next town on business of importance, he had just placed his foot on the steps, when he remembered some directions to be given to his servants. He walked over the fields in the direction of the farm-house, to be gone only a few minutes, but had not returned in an hour. When his steps were followed, he was found lying in the field in the vicinity of a stile, stone dead. He died of a spasm of the heart.

In conclusion, I will say that I would not have attempted to depict a phase in a character which was so painful and forbidding, if it had not been modified at last by the tender quality of mercy and by the precious grace of penitence and forgiveness. The best lessons of a Christian life are not always to be learned from the best, nor the worst from the worst. Judge not, that ye be not

judged. The hardest struggles are those which result in the sublimest triumphs. So when again the church-bell tolled, and when the funeral rites were ended, I turned away into the living world with painful thoughts, but thankful for a ray of hope to pierce the darkness of the shadowy vale, and that, in tender mercy God had touched at last, that HEART OF ADAMANT.

THE END.

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